

ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis:

GOZAR
IRANINAN CULTURAL PARK

Zara Naser, Master of Architecture and Master
of Historic Preservation, 2016

Thesis Directed By:

Madlen Simon , AIA
Associate Professor

“Raise your words, not your voice. It is the rain that grows flowers, not thunder.”

RUMI

The severed relationship between Iran and the United States is encapsulated within the abandoned architecture of the former Iranian Embassy. In essence, architecture has become the physical manifestation of a problem. This thesis will investigate how architecture can embody cultural healing by revitalizing the abandoned site of the former Iranian embassy. Indeed, architecture has the presence and authority necessary to begin to mend severed ties between two major global entities. Ultimately, the project proposes a Gozar—an arrangement of architectural interventions within a cultural park which reveals the true culture: the food, music, costume, language—of Iran, as a way of combating the stereotypes about Iran that have prevailed throughout the United States. The proposed cultural park seeks to bring hope and vibrant interaction within this underutilized space. Temporary, yet timeless, interventions located within the premises of the abandoned Iranian Embassy will create a place that engages visitors with the customs and history of Iran.

GOZAR
IRANIAN CULTURAL PARK

By

Zara Naser

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Architecture and
Masters of Historic
Preservation
2016

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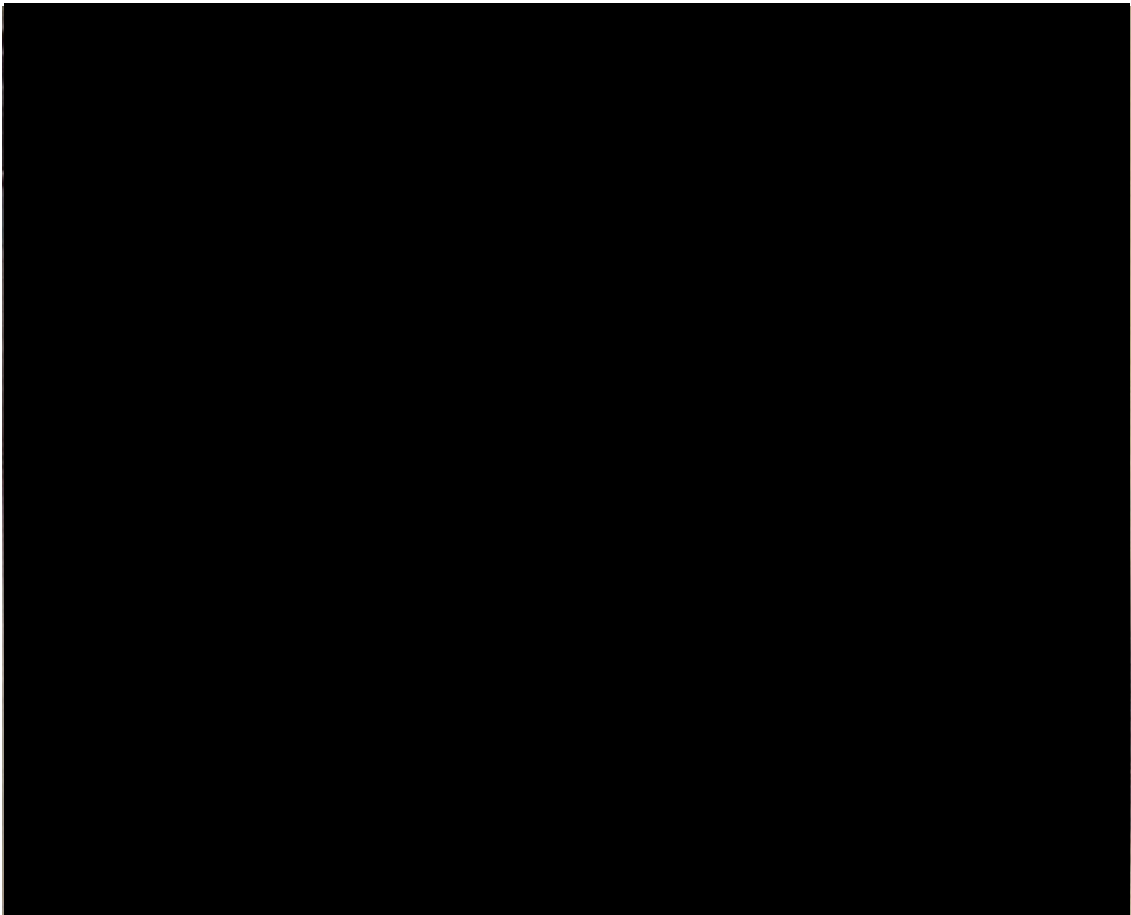
Brian P. Kelly, AIA Professor

Donald Linebaugh, Area Chair, Graduate program for Historic
Preservation

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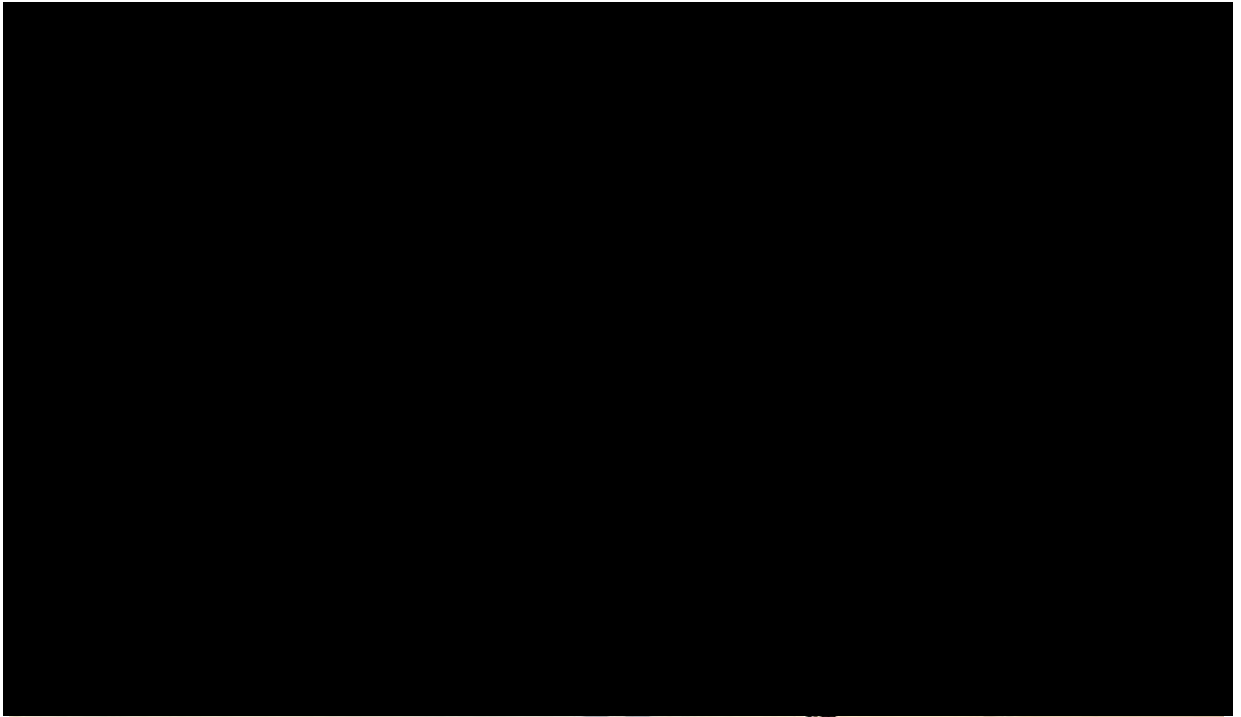
Preface

National Geographic magazine, though not easily accessible, was one of my favorite magazines when I lived in Iran. After moving to the United States seven years ago with my family, one of the first things I did after settling down was buy a National Geographic atlas—I was so excited to get to the page about my country and see how Americans pictured it. Flipping through pages and looking at other pictures from other countries, I imagined seeing Azadi Tower (Fig 2), Khajo Bridge (Fig 3), Persepolis (Fig 4), and many other historic icons. Instead, when finally turning to Iran's page, I was met by this picture (Fig 1):



(Fig 1) image pf Tehran streets, Atlas of the world, National Geographic eight edition

I thought, “This is how they see my country? That is all they see about my country? A country with more than 19 sites that are listed on UNESCO world heritage list?” At that moment I decided I wanted to have a small role in changing this image. I felt I needed to re-introduce the country I knew and the culture that shaped me to my fellow Americans and Iranian-Americans who never had the chance to travel to Iran.



(Fig 2).Azadi Tower, Photo by Christiaan Triebert , Taken on June 30, 2011
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/christiaantrieberrt/5892554580>,



(Fig 3) Khajo Bridge, Isfahan, By author :Zara Naser



(Fig 4) Persepolis, Shiraz, By author: Zara Naser

Dedication

To my best friend Shahed and to my mother

And people of Iran, my homeland.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Madlen Simon for all her support and patience. Donald Linebaugh for his positive attitude and support. I also want to thank Shorieh Talaat for his never-ending mentorship and I would like to thank Professor Hooman Koliji for the inspiration I gained from him for this project and Eli Shanklin for his contribution.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Architecture has an important role in this culturally-aware and transparent education that we are in need of. “Whether motivated by exceptionalism, isolationism, triumphalism or sheer indifference – probably some of each over time – the United States has somehow failed to equip a significant percentage of its citizenry with the basic information necessary to follow international events, let alone participate in formulating and executing the foreign policy that is an essential component of self-government in a healthy modern democracy. This condition is reflected in the basic inadequacy of the educational system at every level, when it comes to understanding the world we live in. Americans of all ages have long scored lower than citizens of other countries on geography and current-events awareness quizzes and shown a stunning inability even to locate major countries on the map, let alone develop an appreciation for their cultures or their roles in global affairs”.¹

The severed relationship between Iran and the United States can be encapsulated within the abandoned architecture of the Iranian Embassy. In essence, architecture has become the physical manifestation of problem. This thesis investigates how architecture can manifest solutions to the social issues fueled by the broken ties between two nations—how can architecture inform culture? For more than 30 years, Iran and the United States of America have nursed the wounds of past offenses. Lack of communication and exposure to one another’s culture has led to

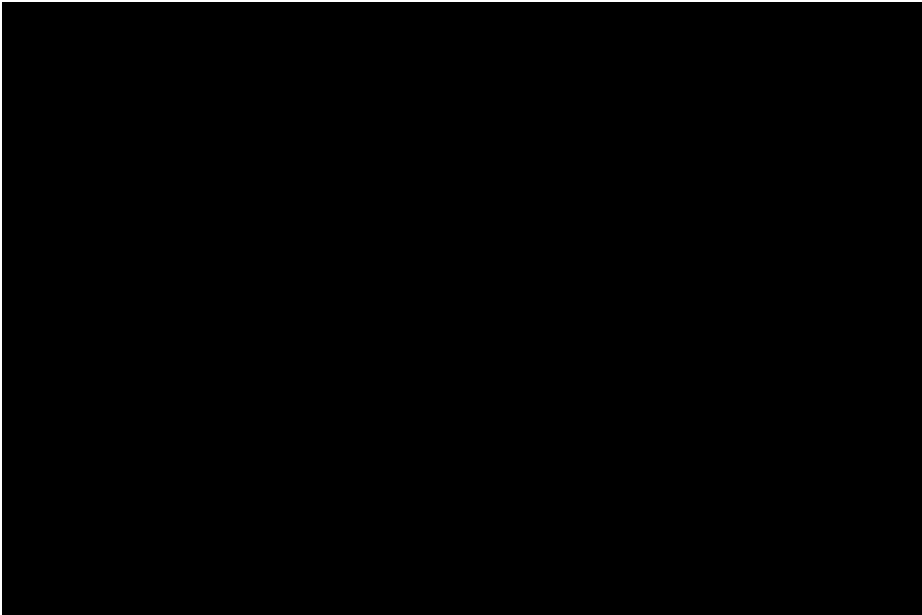
¹ Sanford J. Ungar, “*American Ignorance*” March 23, 2015, president of Goucher college in Baltimore

misinformation throughout the media, and an America that is undereducated about the people and culture of Iran. Indeed, architecture has the presence and authority necessary to begin to mend severed ties between two major global entities.

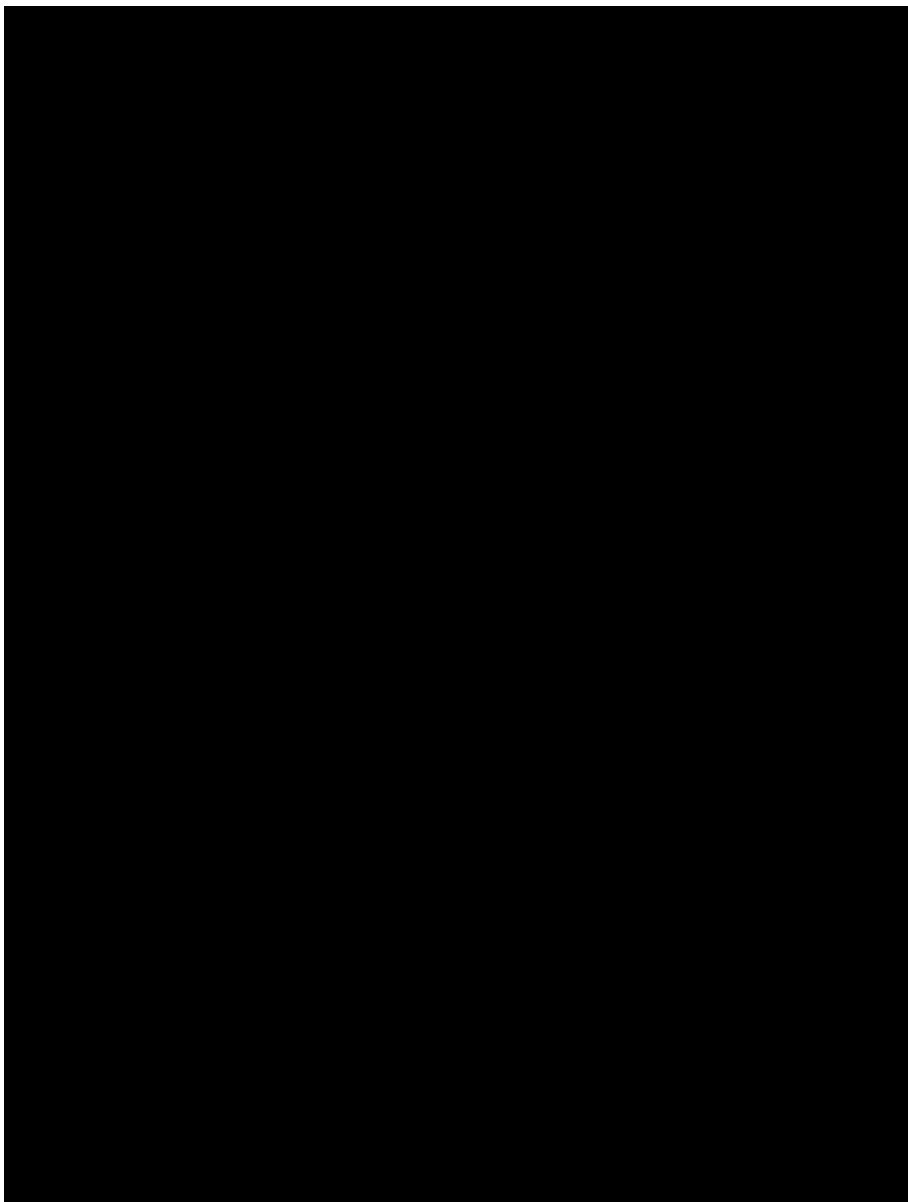
Designing a place to provide an authentic experience for users and visitors to share in and understand it, would help to educate people. Ultimately, this thesis proposes the installation of a series of temporary architectural interventions within a Gozar [see page 3 for definition], which reveals the true culture of Iran, as a way of combating the stereotypes about Iran that have prevailed throughout the United States. The Gozar will bring hope and vibrant interaction within the underutilized space of the Iranian Embassy. Temporary interventions, located within the premises of the abandoned embassy, will create a place that engages visitors with the food, music, costume, language and culture of Iran (as it exists today, and as it existed in history). The existing embassy will serve as a window to the past, an icon representing a broken relationship, and an image frozen in time. Visitors will be compelled to interact with the exterior of the Iranian Embassy (because the public has been denied access to embassy buildings), encouraging them wonder why the grounds are in such a poor state. At its core, this social intervention is meant to spur a cultural interaction between Americans and Iranians. The hope is that the Iranian Embassy will reopen, and therefore the interventions positioned throughout the space will be designed to lightly touch the earth and may be removed once official use of the embassy resumes.

What is a Gozar?

A Gozar can be translated in two different ways in Farsi, the first translation is the physical meaning of the term (Fig 5-6), which is a pathway, crossing or a connecting point. The second translation of the word figuratively means transition, passage or evolution. In recent years, the relationship between Iran and the United States has shifted and nothing seems more appropriate than a Gozar to represent this transition.



(Fig 5) Gozar Marvi, Tehran, Iran , <http://www.bezanimbiroon.ir/>



(Fig 6) Gozar Saleh ,Tehran ,Iran, <http://www.wisgoon.com/pin/14846490/>

Methodology:

The process created for arriving at an architectural solution for this thesis is as follows:

The first step is analyzing the history of the Iranian Embassy along Massachusetts Avenue in Washington, DC to uncover whether it is the correct site for this project. The criteria for site selection included: a strong connection to the history between Iran and United States, transit accessibility, high volume of pedestrian foot-traffic near and at the site, and the presence of public amenities that could keep people in the area during the day throughout the year.

The second phase is analyze the history and design principles behind the Persian Garden. Ultimately, not every aspect of the Persian Garden typology was incorporated into the thesis design, only key elements—a major gateway, small pavilions, and water features.

The third step is to study the characteristics of temporary architecture. How the temporary structures can fit in-between the existing buildings, house numerous activities, and be assembled and disassembled are all key components in understanding the tectonic nature of this thesis.

The fourth step is identifying the target users—Iranians, Iranian-Americans, Americans, and tourists, alike—for this site and incorporating program elements that respond to them. As defined by the nature of this design, the programed activities are also temporary, dictated by the seasons and meant to last only for days or weeks at a time.

The final step is to combine all of the previously mentioned research elements into a design concept so as to provide a memorable and authentic experience for users.

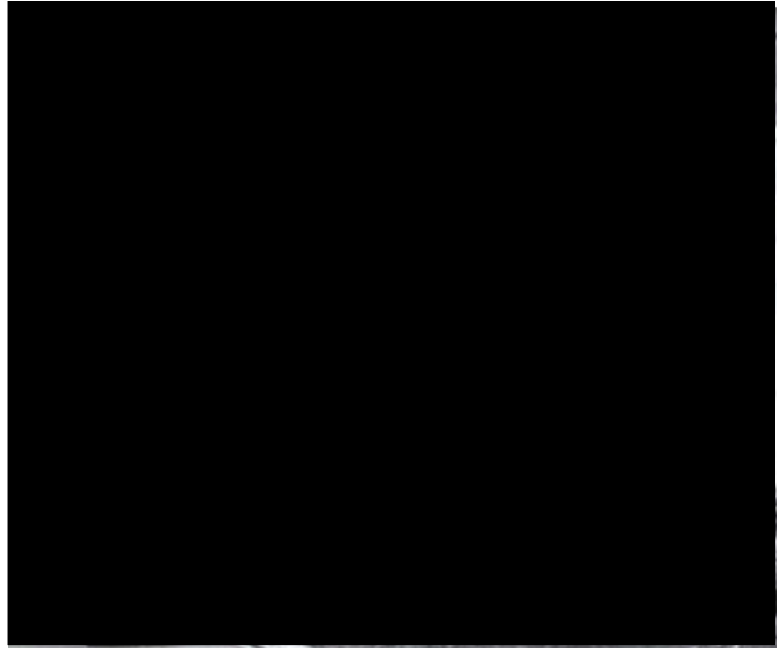
Timeline of the relationship of Iran and the USA and the Embassy Complex



(Fig.7)
<https://washingtonembassygardens.wordpress.com/2013/12/22/frederick-h-brooke/>

1930

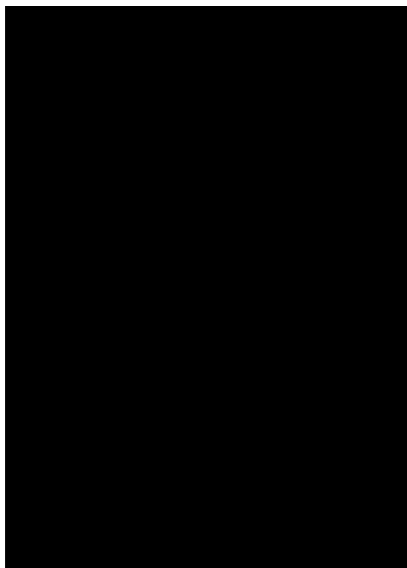
The Colonial Revival style residence building was built by Frederick H. Brooke



(Fig.8) goo.gl/xPm0OP

1956

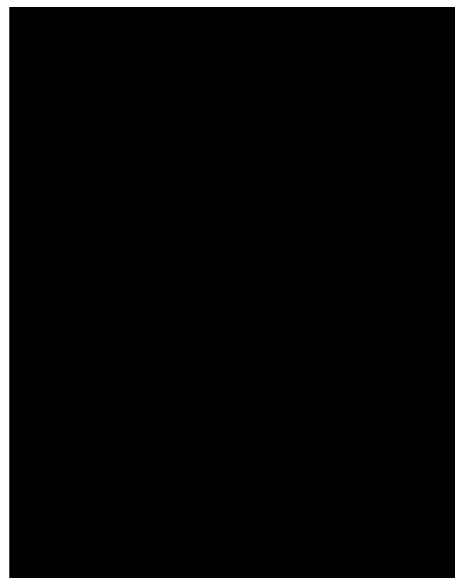
The Embassy building was built by Francis Keally



(Fig.9)
<http://geneall.net/en/ancestorszahedi/>

1973

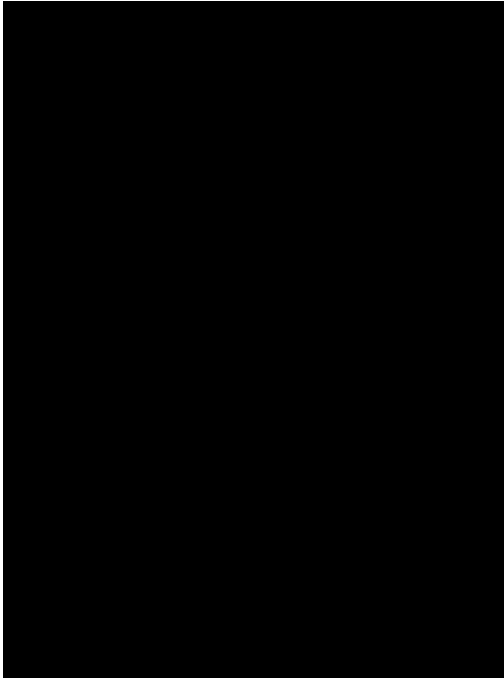
Ardeshir Zahedi was assigned as ambassador to the US



(Fig.10) <http://the-polyglot.blogspot.com/2011/01>

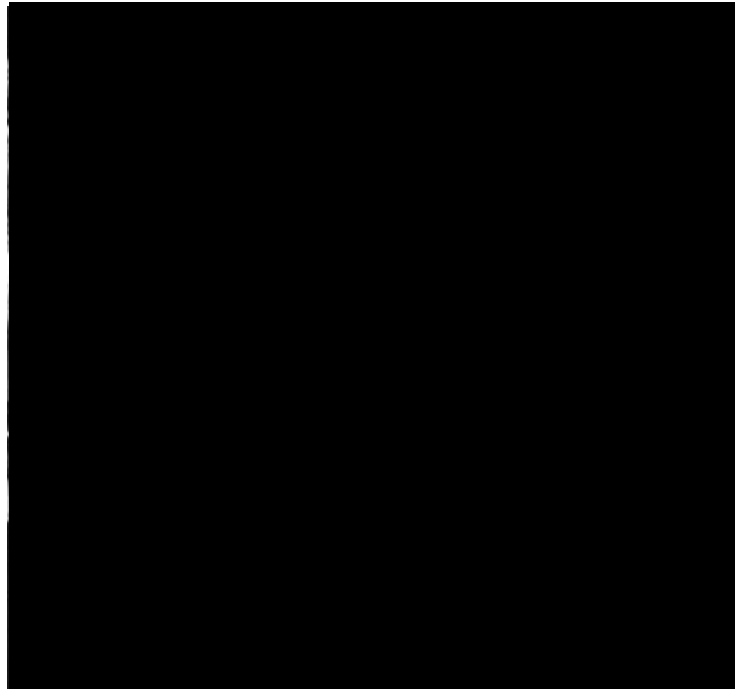
1973

Embassy Building was renovated by Michael Szell



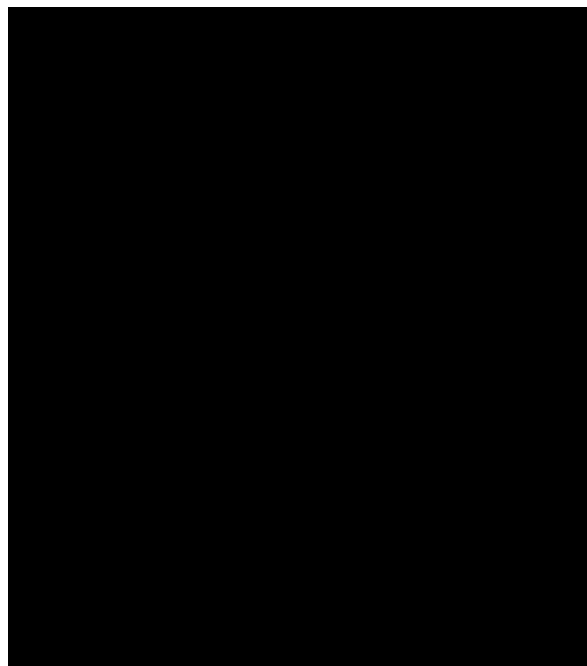
(Fig 11) <https://ushypocrisy.com/2015/02/16/on-the-36th-anniversary-of-irans-islamic-revolution-and-the-conflicted-history-of-u-s-iran-relation/>

1979 Jan
The Islamic Revolution triumphs



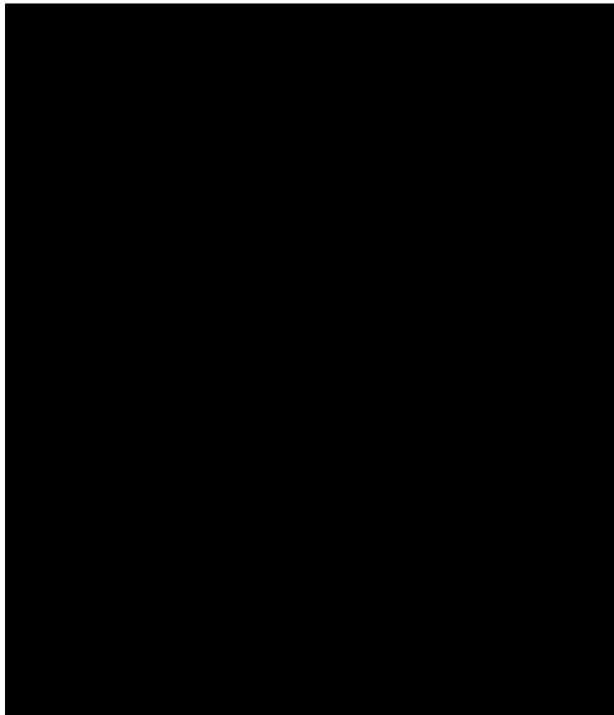
(Fig 12) http://www.historyguy.com/iran-us_hostage_crisis.html

1979 Oct
Iran takes US embassy employees hostages and requested Shah's return to Iran



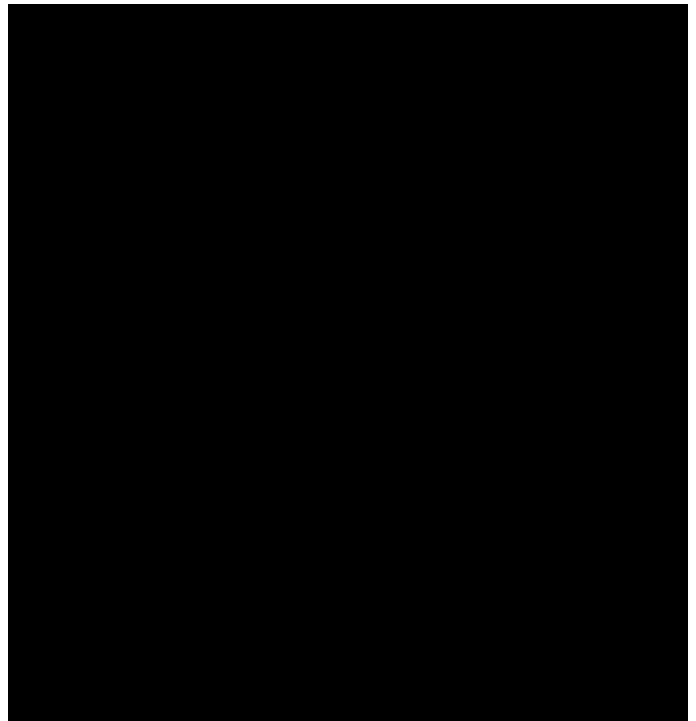
(Fig 13) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran_hostage_crisis

1980
US cuts all diplomatic relationship with Iran
and Embassy complex closed



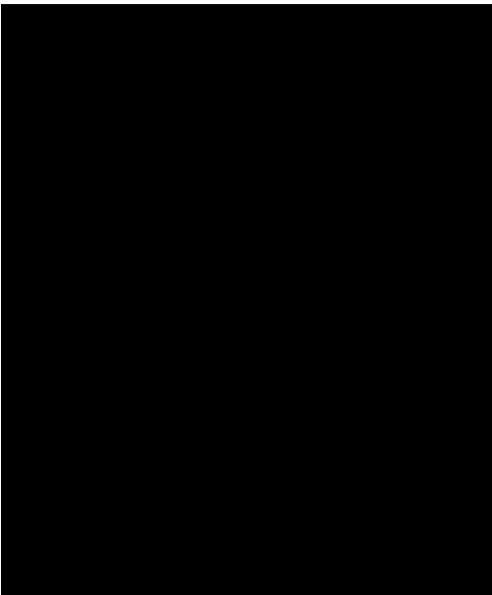
(Fig. 14) <http://media-cache-ec0.pinimg.com/736x/b4/f8/06/b4f806101e9e5ab2bfafdb7d8f05f5cc.jpg>

1981
Hostages released, Khamenei becomes president



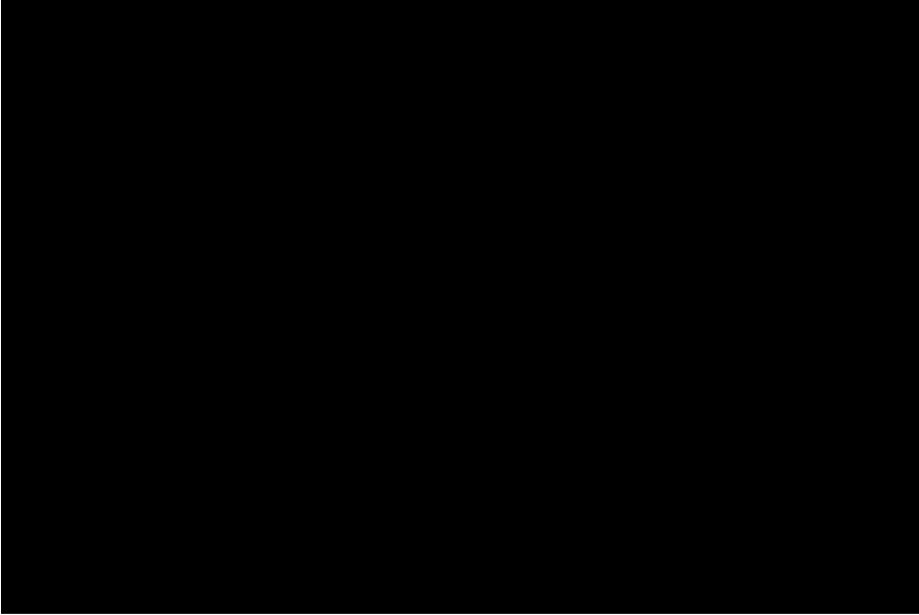
(Fig. 15) https://www.ctbto.org/uploads/tx_ctbtoslider/Clinton_signing_640x360_01.jpg

1995
Clinton signs trade embargo



(Fig 16) <http://www.uspresidentialhistory.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Madeleine-Albright-2.15.16e.jpg>

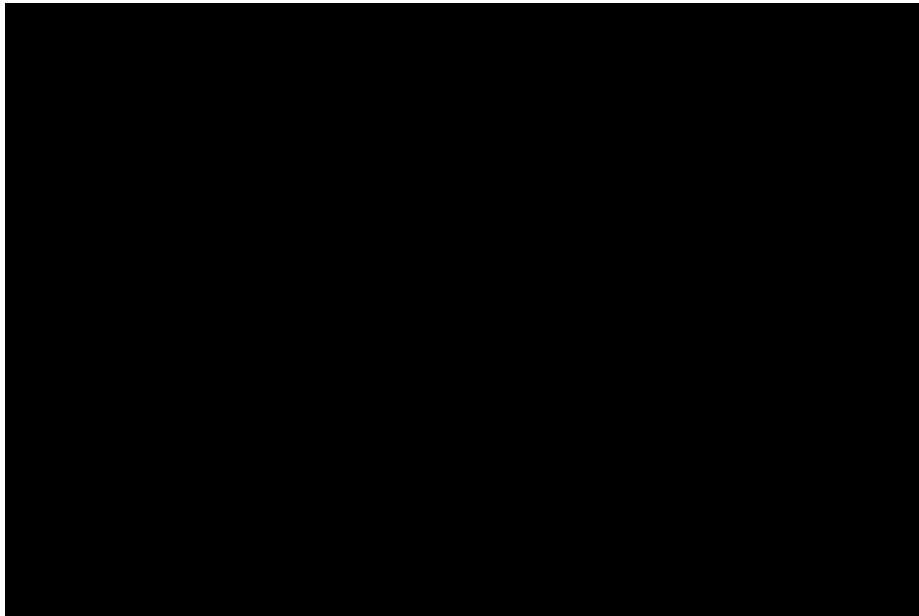
2000
US acknowledges role in 1953
coupe



(Fig 17) <http://www.darkpolitricks.com/2014/02/obama-and-rouhani-need-to-bring-their-children-into-line-and-finalize-the-nuclear-deal-now-not-later/>

2013

Presidents of two countries talk after 3 decades



(Fig 18) <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-30805655>

2016

The joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Ease on sanctions

Chapter 2: Site

A suitable site for a cultural park should feature several characteristics. The site should be in an urban setting so visitors have easy access to it—public transportation is important especially for people who are visiting from other states or other countries. The site should be in close proximity to other public amenities like a park or museum, it is important so visitors to have other options when they visit this site. A site for a cultural park must have some cultural or historic aspect to it or be significant in that matter. Giving some history to the visitors and making the site special is important for a cultural park. Finally, having enough open space on the site to provide both indoor and outdoor experiences for visitors is part of the search for a suitable site.

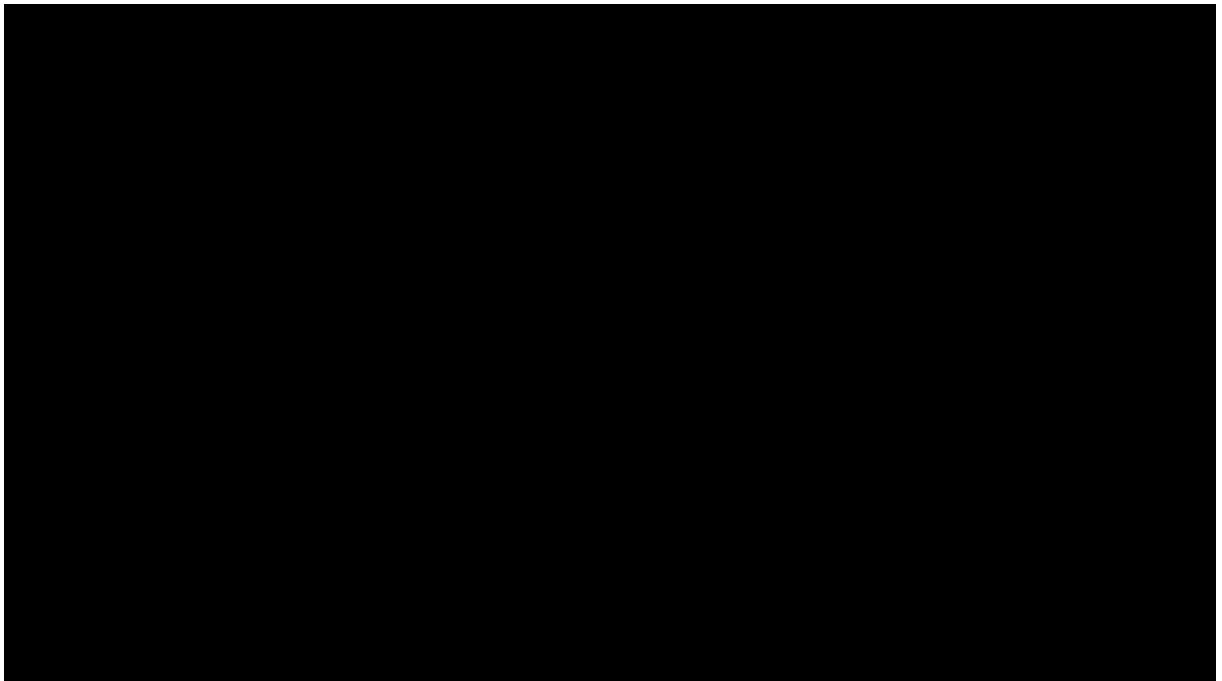
Former Iranian Embassy



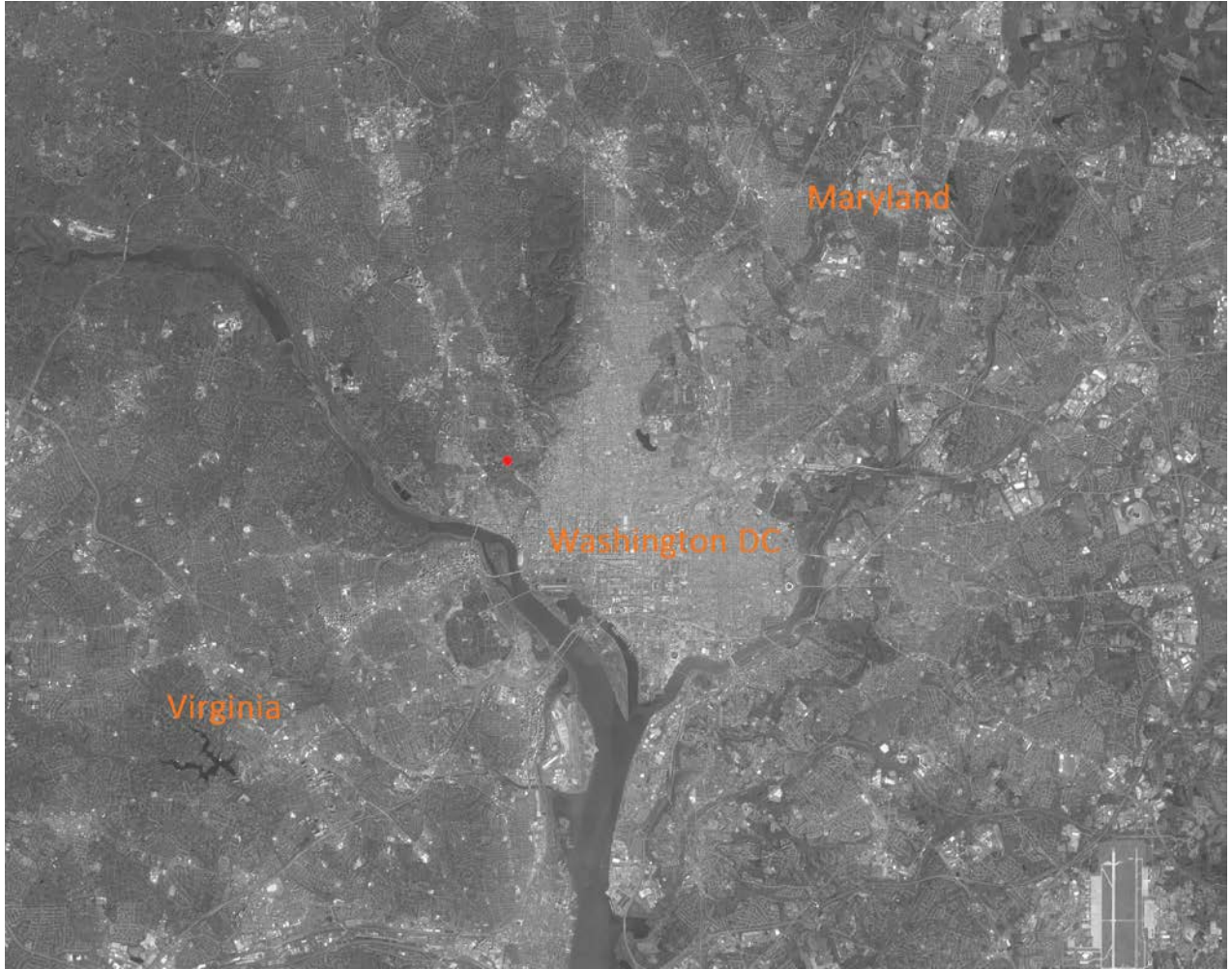
(Fig 23) Aerial view, Google earth Former Iranian embassy, Massachusetts Ave

The Islamic Republic of Iran owns the building at 3005 Massachusetts Ave. NW, one of 11 diplomatic and consular properties that Iran purchased across the United States before the revolution. Another one of the eleven properties is the colonial revival-style ambassador's residence, directly adjacent to embassy.

The idea is to keep the existing buildings closed, the way they are, and develop the temporary interventions in between and around the existing buildings. In a way, this idea would connect the past to the future and invite people to visit the state of the existing building as it is. This site and the existing buildings on it are a symbol of the closed relationship between Iran and the United States.



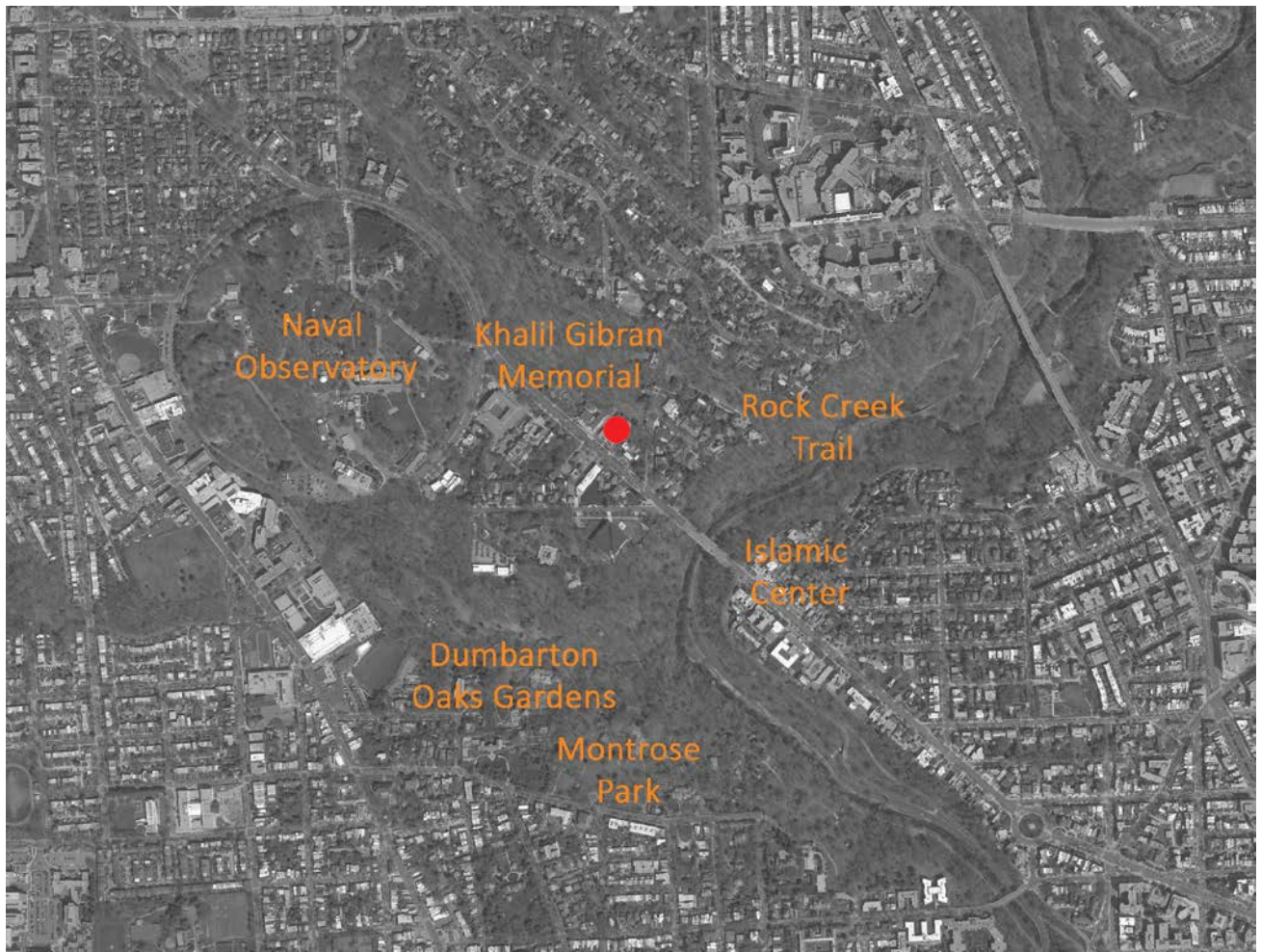
(Fig 24) View to the courtyard from the room across the Persian room, Eric Parnes/Courtesy of Ayyam Gallery



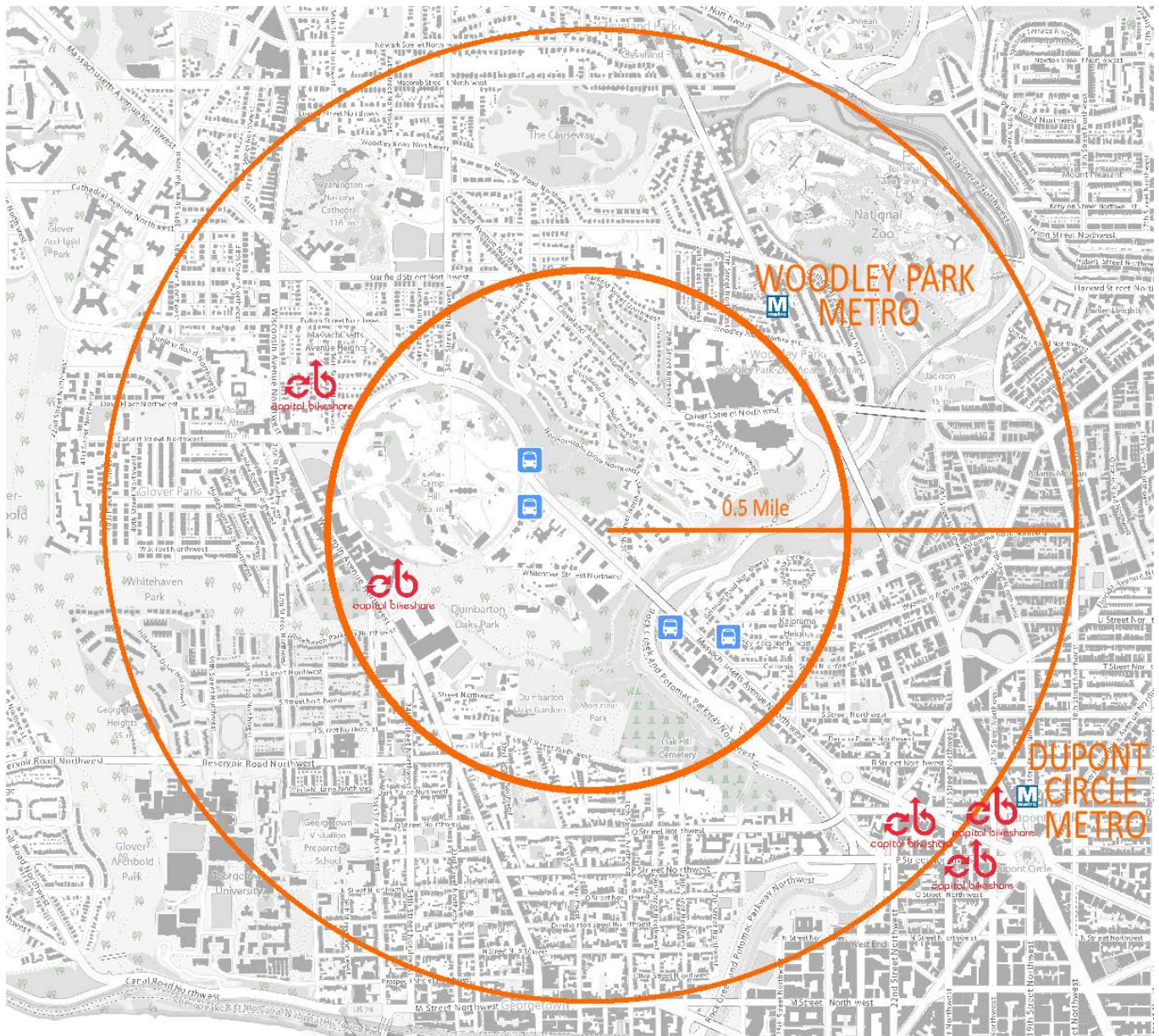
(Fig 25) Site relationship to Virginia and Maryland,DC region houses the 3rd largest Iranian population. Map illustrated by author: Zara Naser



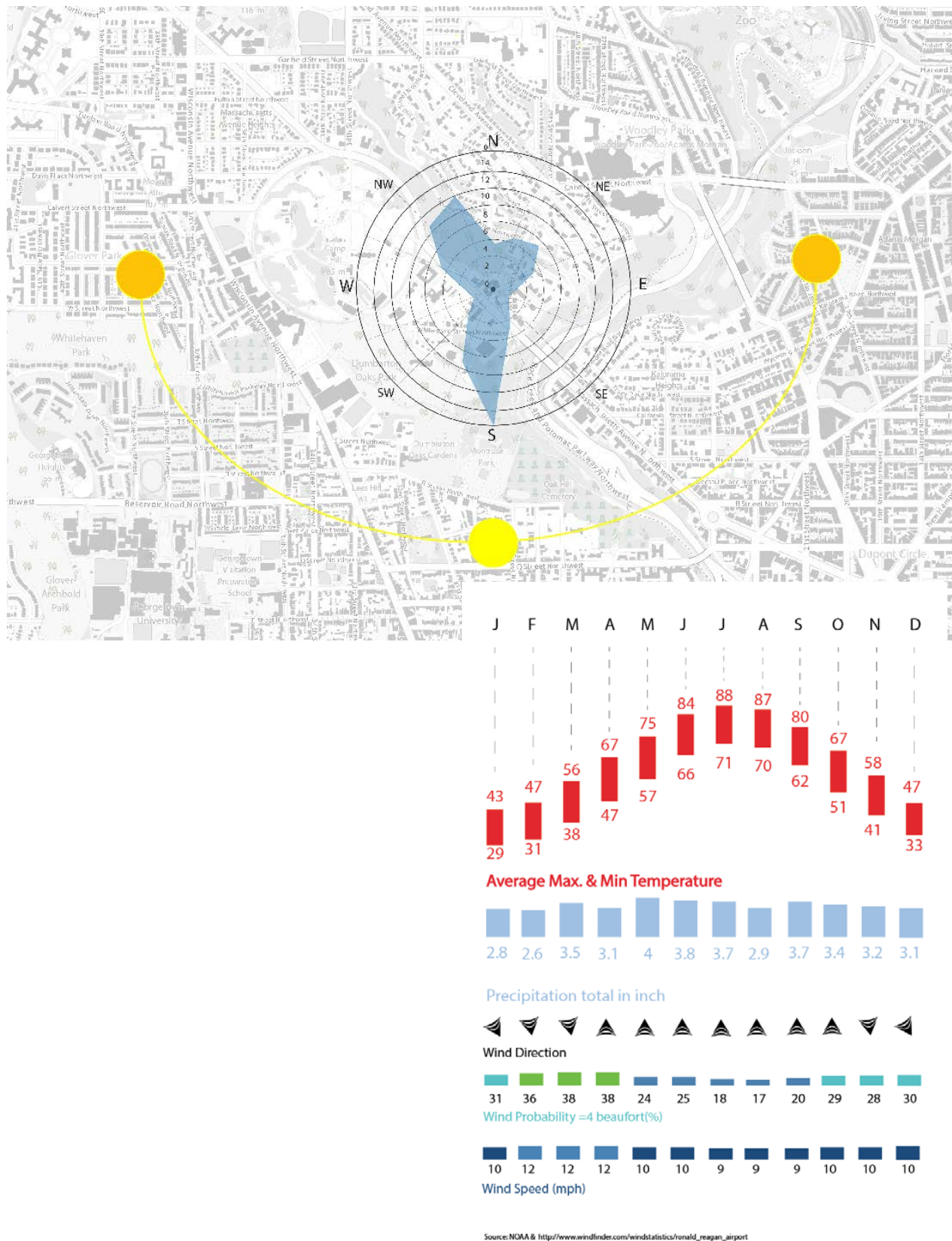
(Fig 26) Site context in relation to downtown DC, Map illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 27) Public amenities around the site, Map Illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 28) Transportation and walking distance, Map Illustrated by author: Zara Naser



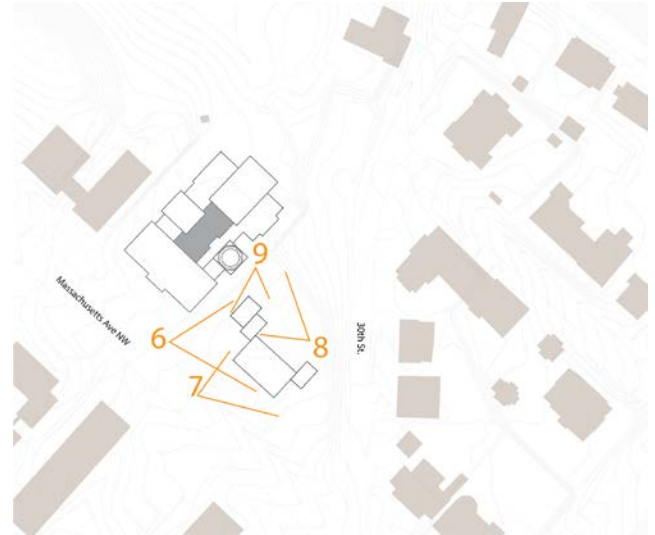
(Fig 29) Climate, Sun and wind direction, Map and diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Site Photos:

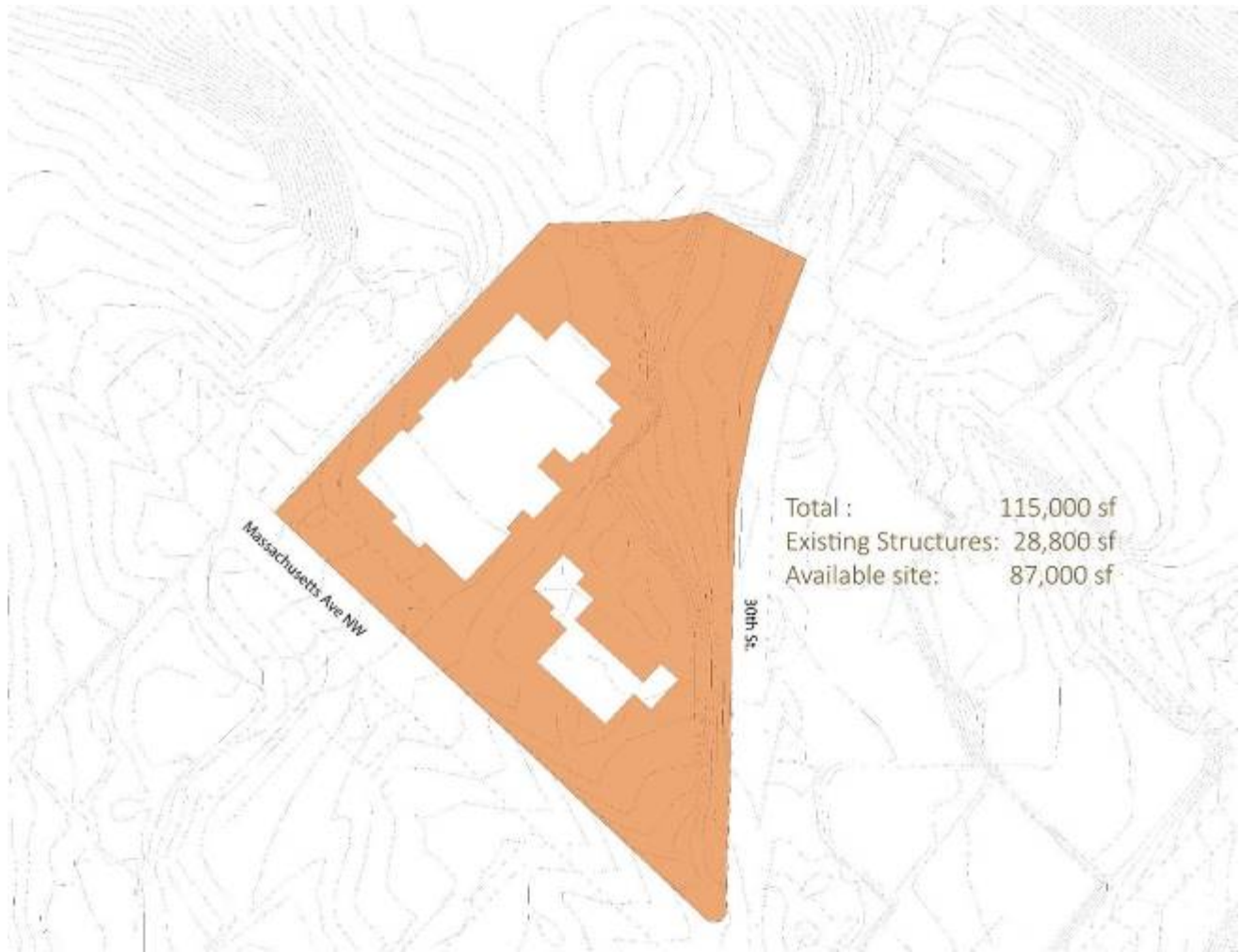


(Fig 30) Abandoned Iranian embassy, Photos by author: Zara Naser

Residence:



(Fig31) Residence building, Photos by author: Zara Naser



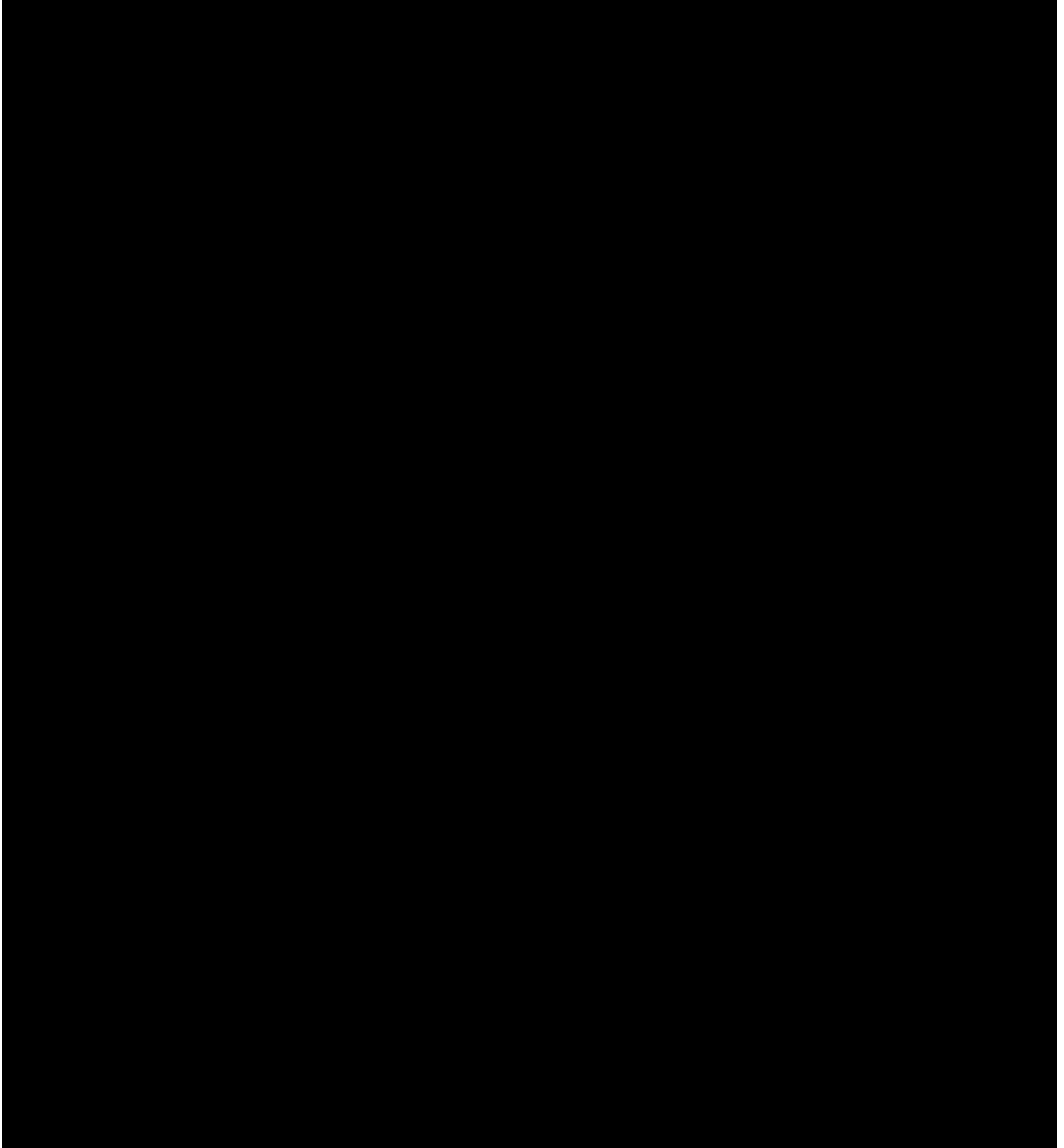
(Fig32) Site Dimensions and size, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Chapter 3: Persian Gardens

Persian Gardens

Designed with a sacred geometry, Persian gardens, represent and illustrate a union of the mortal and material world, in relationship with the eternal universe. Geometric assembly can be considered one of the most prominent features of Persian gardens. The layout of Persian gardens was and is based on a four-part division with some sort of pavilion at its intersection. Ultimately, this formation represents the pre-Islamic Iranian division of the earth into four quarters, most likely inspired by four elements of nature (Water, Fire, Earth, Air). During the Islamic period (AD 651), the quartered pattern of Persian gardens was further reinforced by the belief in four heavenly streams, similar to the image of heaven in the Quran. Thus, the general pattern of most Persian gardens consisted of a rectangular space quartered by intersecting streams of water and earthen pathways. The typical irrigation system of the time has also been known as another factor in the formation of geometric garden structure, outside of the faith-based influences.²

² Farahani M. Leila, Motamed B. Jamei E., "Persian Gardens: Meanings, Symbolism, and Design



(Fig34) <http://www.orientalarchitecture.com/sid/807/iran/kashan/bagh-e-fin-garden>

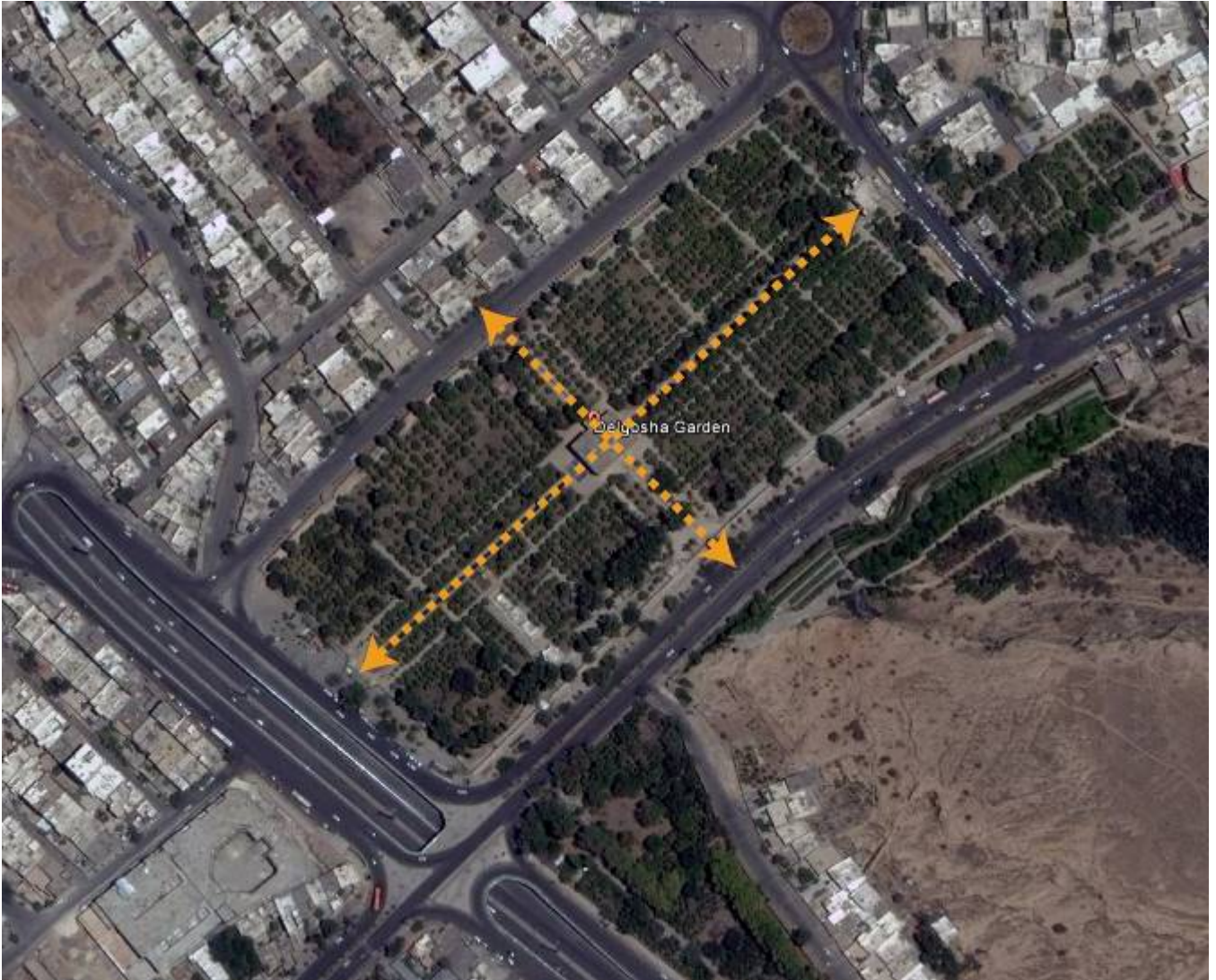
Fin Garden Plan, Kashan, Iran



(Fig 35) Jahan-Nama Garden, Shiraz, Iran Aerial View, Google earth, Diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 36) Chehelstoon Palace Garden, Isfahan, Iran, Google earth, diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 37) Delgosha Garden, Shiraz, Iran, Google earth, Diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 38) Eram Garden, Shiraz, Iran , Google earth ,diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Entry Gates:

Typically surrounding Persian gardens were large walls, making the space far more contained and private. For this thesis, not only does defining the entry point become incredibly important, but also changing the tectonic nature of the wall becomes necessary, as the wall along Massachusetts Avenue will be for the public. Usually the entrance has a lintel, sometimes in the form of a building. In the *Shahzadeh Garden* (Figs. 40 & 41), the entrance beautifully frames the pavilion and the main waterway in the center of the garden; guiding the visitor from the entrance

to the pavilion. The lintel buildings could also be used as a reception space for guests alongside defining the entrance. In some gardens such as *Fin* (Fig. 39), the entrance building has a latticed wall, which blocks views to the interior, with the entrance located on the minor axis.³



(Fig 39) Fin garden Entry gate , Kashan,Iran, By author: Zara Naser

³ Borazjani,V & M.R.Javadi.2004 “Persian Gardens: Ancient wisdom ,New perspective” contemporary arts museum of Tehran publications



(Fig 40) Shahzadeh Garden Entry gate, Mahan, Iran, photo by author: Zara Naser



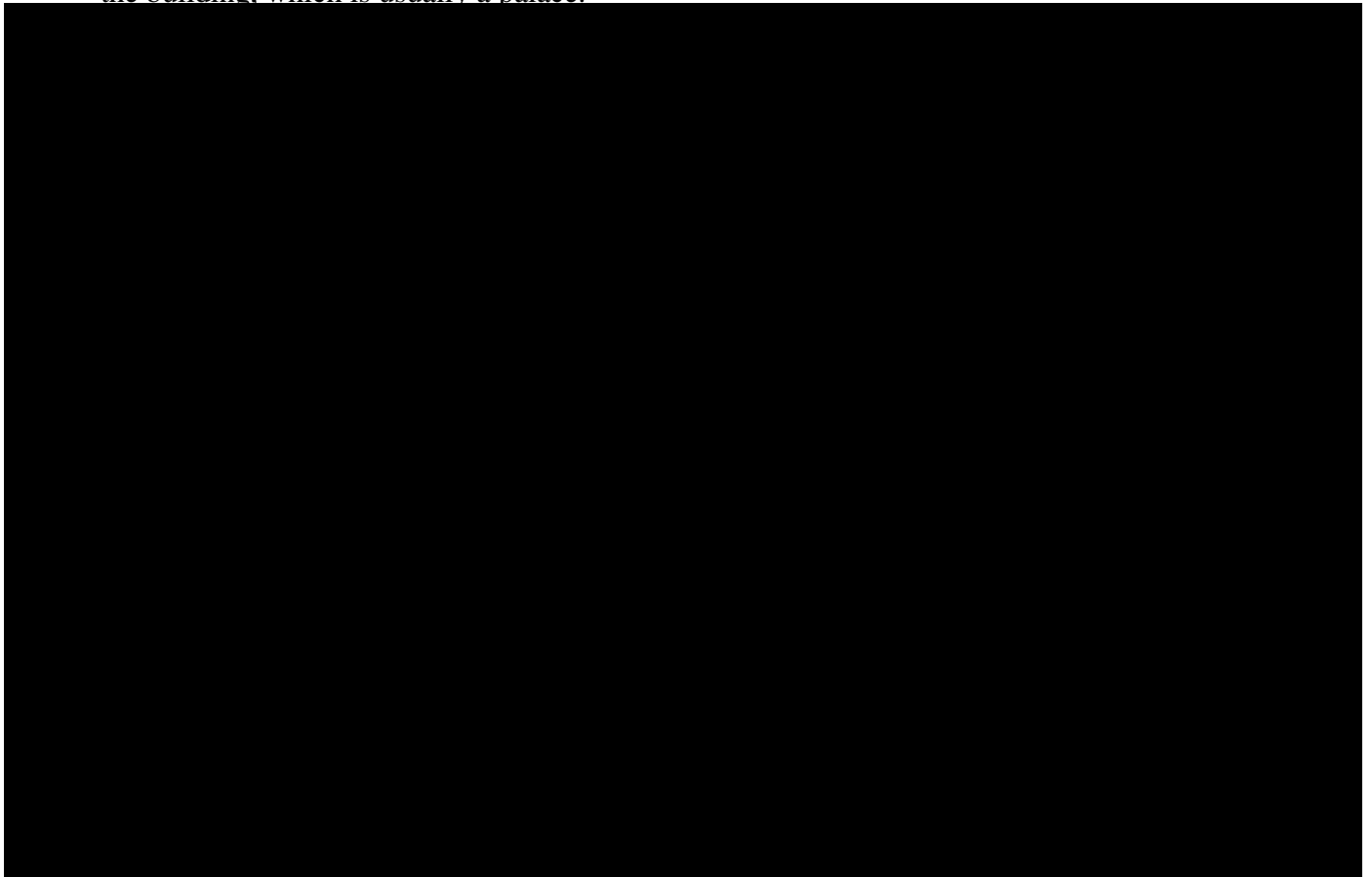
(Fig 41) Shahzadeh Garden Entry gate, Mahan, Iran, photo by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 42) Jahan Nama Garden Entry gate, Shiraz ,Iran ,photo by author: Zara Naser

Pavilions

Pavilions are typically one or two-story buildings, but in some cases may be three-story structures. It is very difficult to find any rules that relate the height of the pavilion to its typology as a house or palace. There also tends to be variations in the plans of the pavilions (Fig. 43). The most common plan configurations are the square and the octagon. In most cases, the square-shaped plan refer to residential use, while hexagonal and octagonal plans are mostly used to portray the monumental aspect of the building, which is usually a palace.⁴

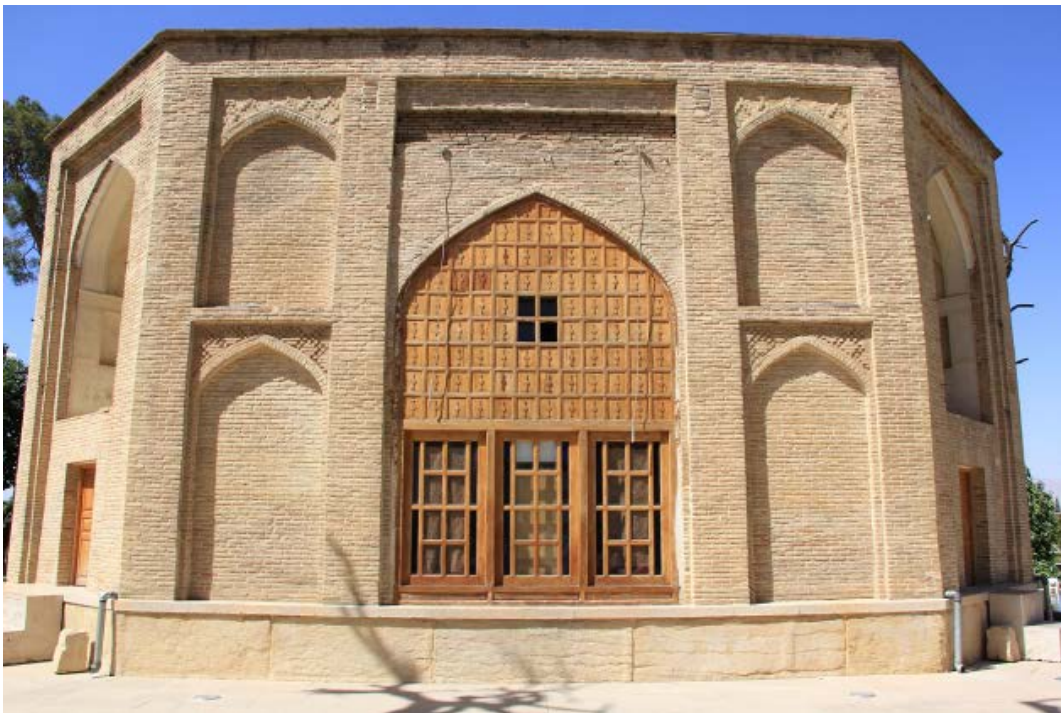


(Fig 43) Plan of the pavilions in Persian gardens, “Persian Gardens and Garden Pavilions” by Donald N. Wilber

⁴ Mohammad Gharibpour, “*Persian Gardens and Pavilions*”, 2014



(Fig 44) Fin Garden, Pavilion, Kashan Iran, photo by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 45) Jahan-Nama Pavilion, Shiraz, Iran, photo by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 46) Elgoli Pavilion , Tabriz, Iran , photo by author:Zara Naser

Water and Irrigation

Thinking of the Persian garden as an image of paradise on earth, water has been observed as a sacred and precious element in ancient Persia. The presence of water in Persian gardens has a dual application—a functional application of irrigation as well as for ornamental and aesthetic purposes. The pattern of *chahar-bagh* is usually defined by intersecting waterways or streams. Streams usually have a sufficient slope to enable the irrigation system required for the garden. Other than waterways, the front space of the pavilion typically led to a pond or pool to reflect the image of the surrounding buildings and sky, connecting the realm of the earthly to the heavenly.⁵

⁵ Farahani M. Leila Motamed B.Jamei E., "Persian Gardens: Meanings, Symbolism ,and Design"



(Fig 47) Fin Garden water channels, Kashan , Iran , Photo by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 48)Shahzadeh Garden, Mahan, Iran, Photo by author Zara Naser



(Fig49) Jahan-Nama Garden Water Channel Shiraz Iran, Photo by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 50) Elgoli Water channel, Tabriz, Iran, Photo by author: Zara Naser

Chapter 4: Temporary Architecture

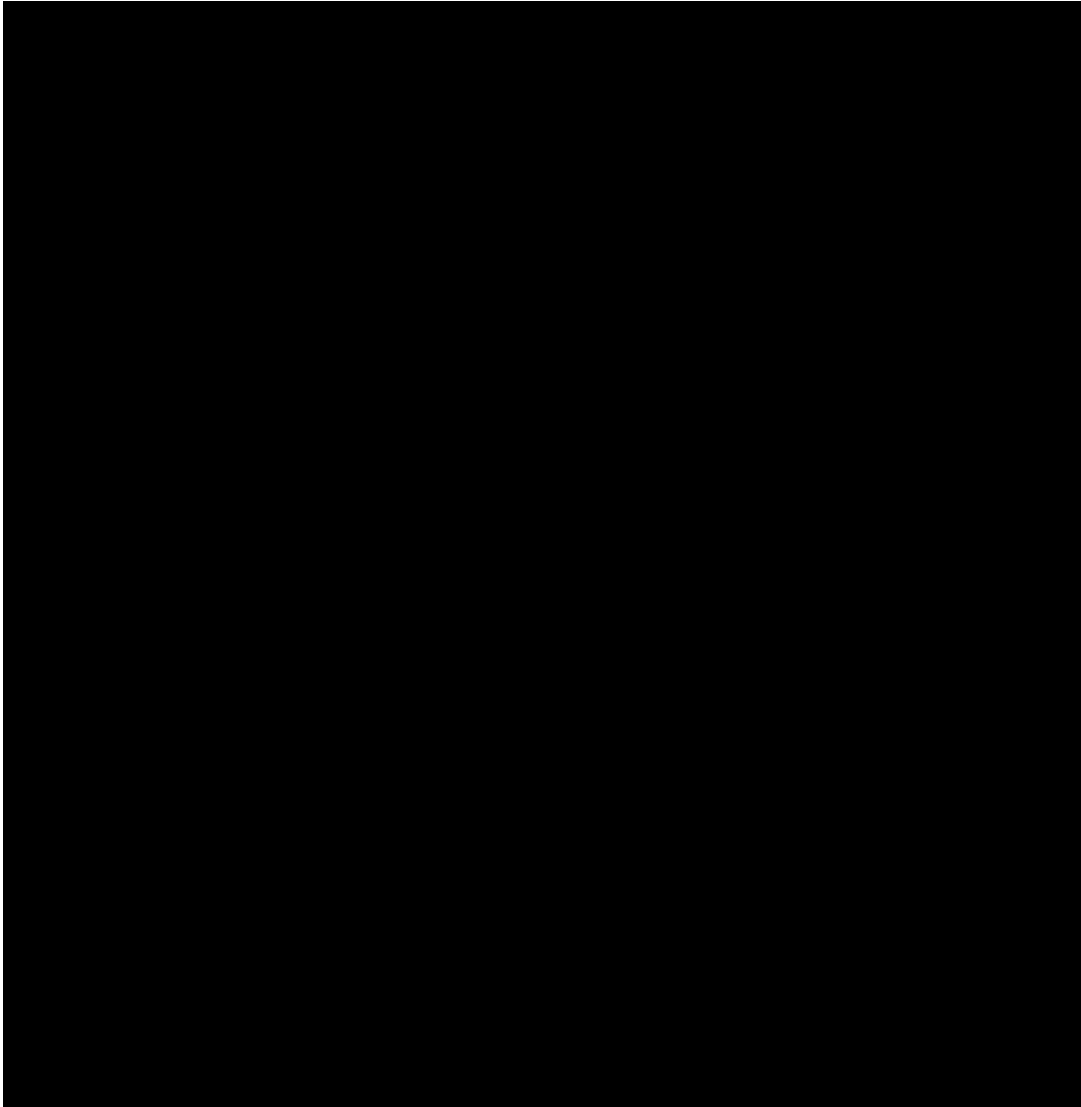
“Temporality is a quality of experience rather than duration of use. It is the antithesis of traditional architecture and urban planning which strives for permanence. Gaining its strength from its limited existence, it creates a desire and urgency that may be lacking long-term solution.”⁶

Temporary or interim architecture serves as an investment within the community in which it is placed, encompassing a set of ideals and making a statement that tests scenarios and ideas within space—interim architecture tests the boundaries of an issues. Temporary architecture is not a new practice or typology; it has existed for ages—“from prehistoric wooden huts and shelters, through medieval stage sets, circuses and world fairs, to the mobile home and post-war prefabs, and wartime and disaster relief. In contemporary architecture we are more familiar with temporary exhibitions and pavilions: Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion (1929) for example or Alison and Peter Smithson's House of the Future for the Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition in London (1956) -- prototypes for modern living that showed their creators' provocative ideas on the future of architecture and urbanism.”⁷ Because longevity is a typical concern for designing within the built environment, normative standards demand that architecture be timeless within its context, standing for 50 years or more, with history and purpose embedded into its structure. Through the lens of temporary design, however, the project needs to fulfill its role vibrantly and effectively, while also having a clean exit strategy. Temporary architecture must

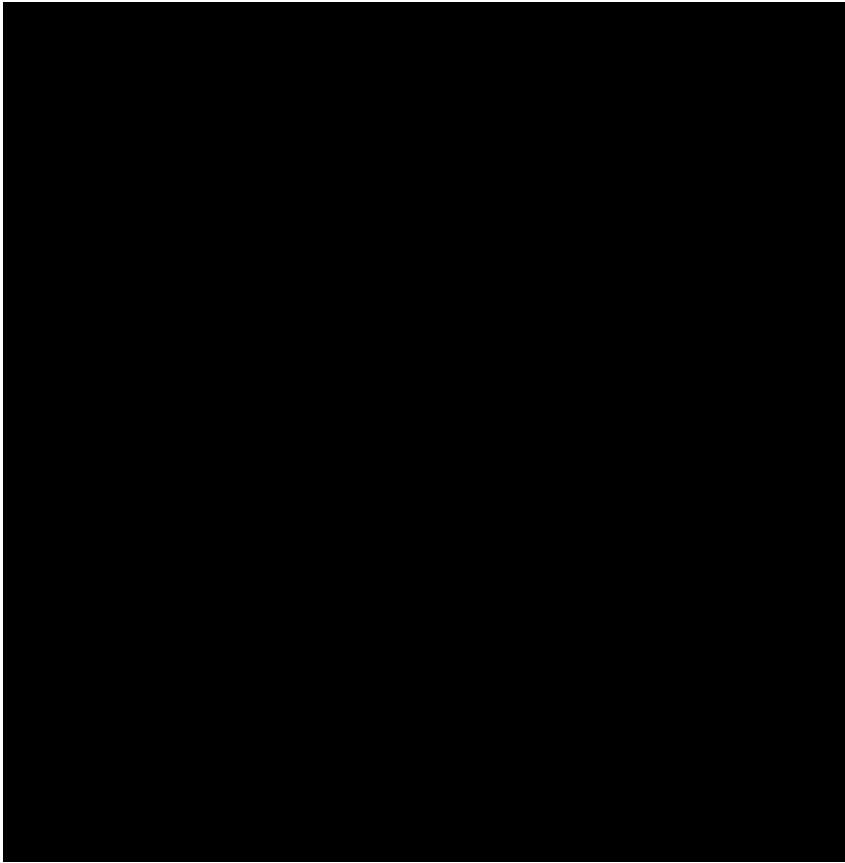
⁶ Margaret Harriet Jackson, “Temporary architecture as urban catalyst”, 2010

⁷ “This is Temporary: Transient Architecture” <http://www.designcurial.com/news/this-is-temporary-transient-architecture-4802906/>. N.p., n.d. Web. 9 Feb. 2016.

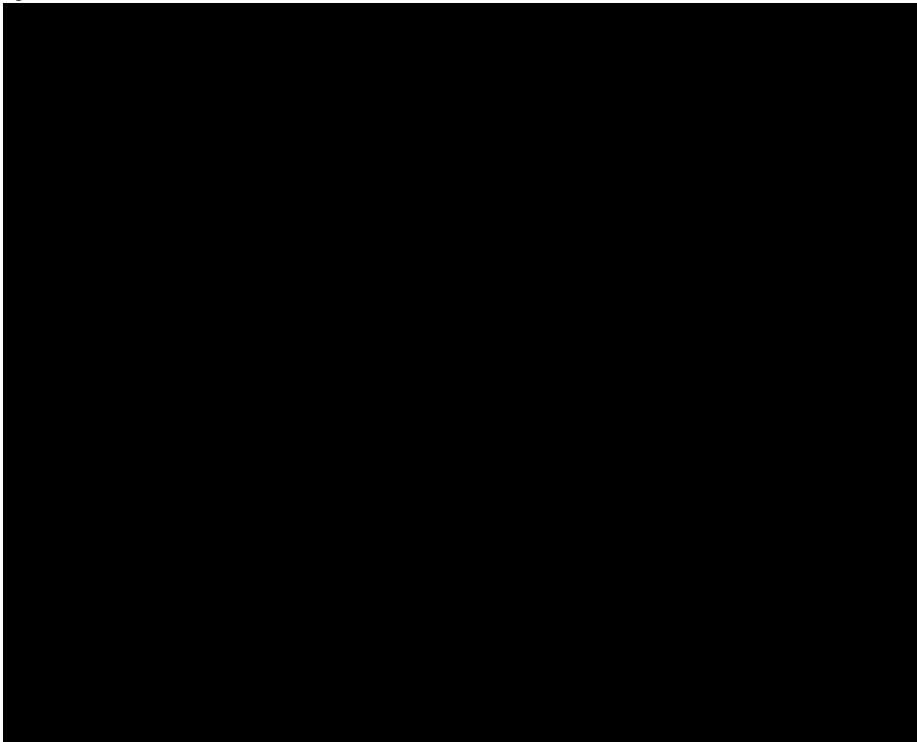
make its purpose known not over time, but in a moment deliver its message to those who bear witness to its presence.



(Fig 51) The Stacked pavilion, Wettswil am albis, Switzerland. Temporary wooden structure,<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/155514993357476539/>



(Fig 52) assembly of the stacked pavilion, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/patricia-brizzio/designtofabrication-proce_b_813307.html



(Fig53)Wood of Net pavilion, Tezuka architects , Japan , <http://ideasgn.com/architecture/woods-net-tezuka-architects/>

Precedents

Follies

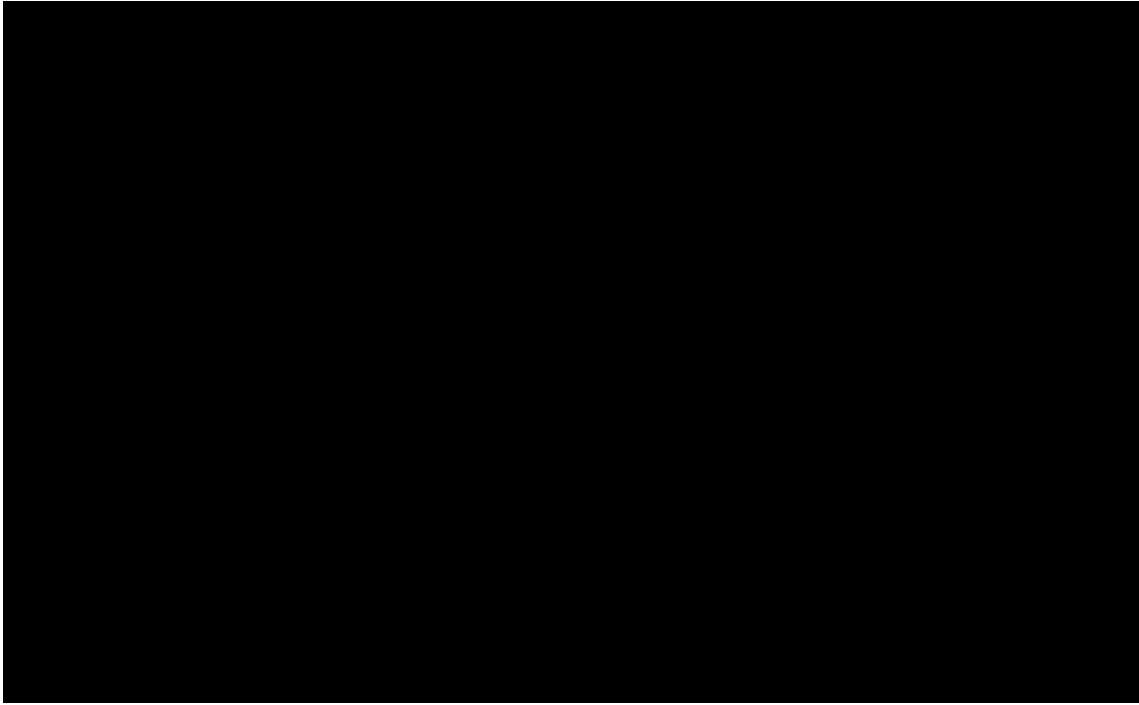
“ Follies (from French folie, “foolishness”), also called Eye catcher, in architecture, a costly, generally nonfunctional building that was erected to enhance a natural landscape.”⁸

Parc de la Villette:

Designed in response to a competition prompt, Parc de la Villette was created to mark the vision of an era and act upon the future economic and cultural development of a key area within Paris. The building is a single structure overlapping the site’s existing features and articulating new programmed activities. The park opposes the landscape notion of Olmsted, widespread during the 19th century, that “in the park, the city is not supposed to exist.” Instead, the project proposes a social and cultural park with activities that include workshops, gymnasium and etc. . Parc de la Villette serves as a glorious precedent for a cultural park embedded with program designed to respond to its context.⁹ (Fig 54)

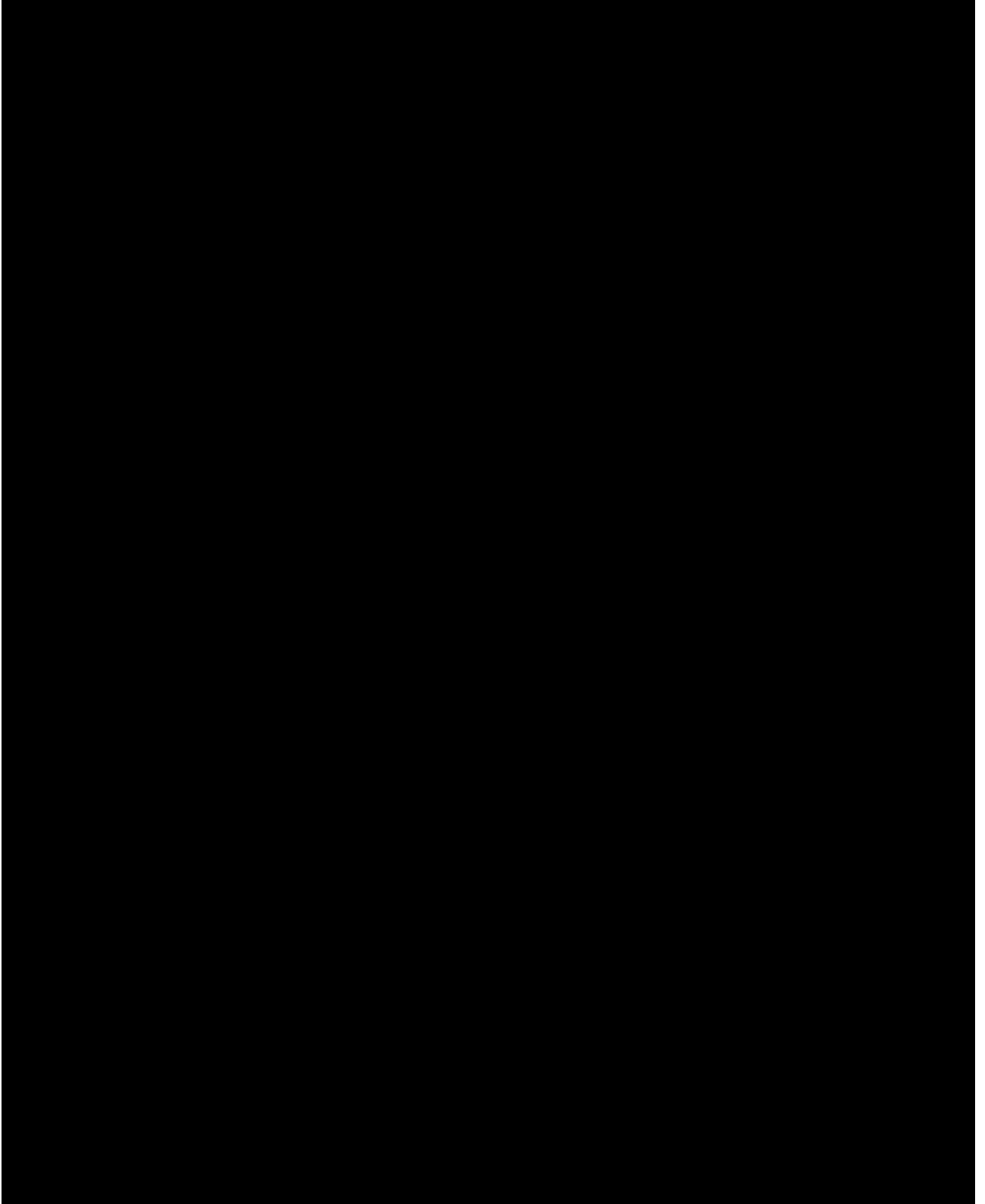
⁸ <https://www.britannica.com/art/folly>

⁹ <http://www.tschumi.com/projects>

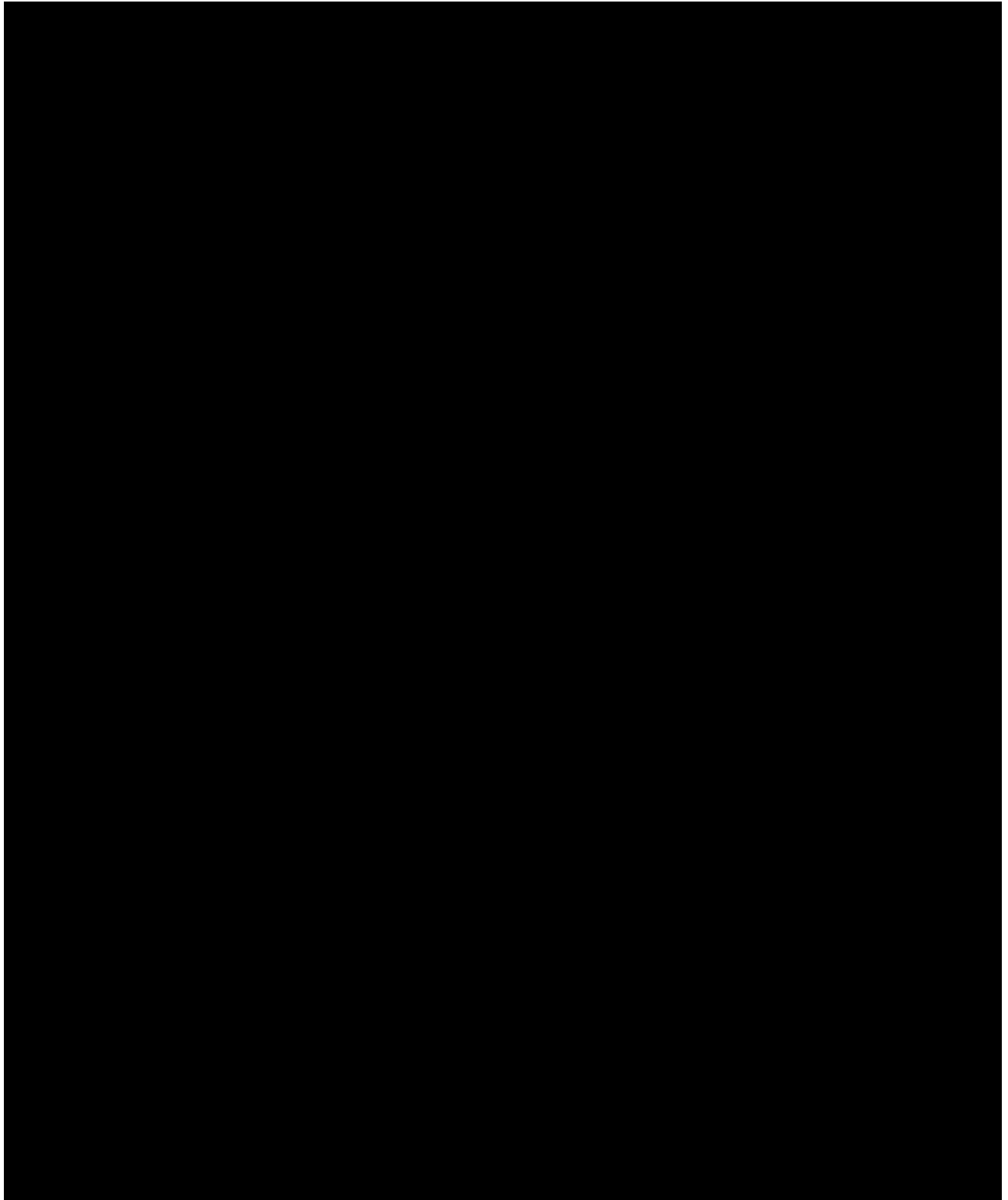


(Fig 54) Aerial view of parc de la Villette

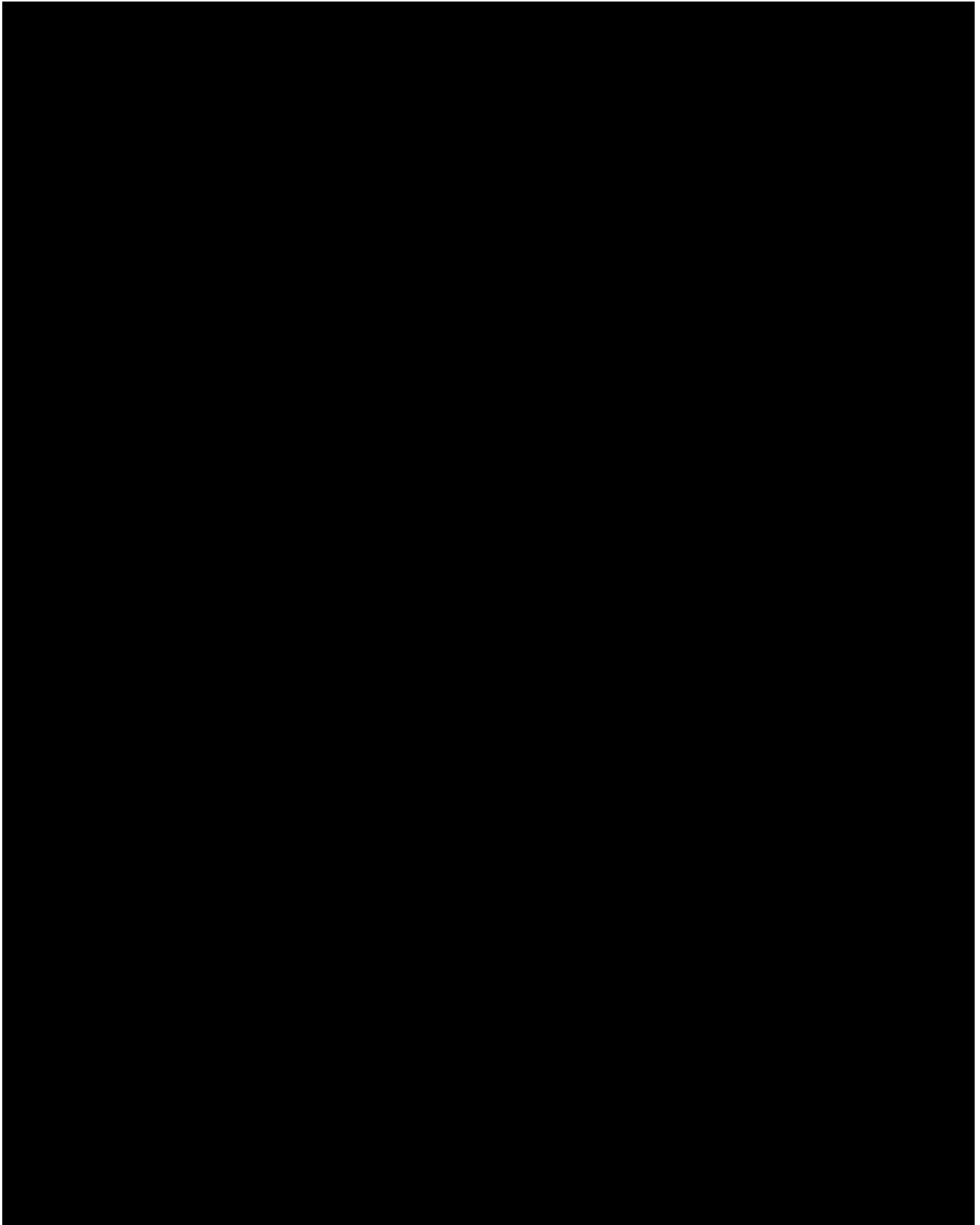
http://blog.parijs.nl/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Parc_la_villette-1024x620.jpg



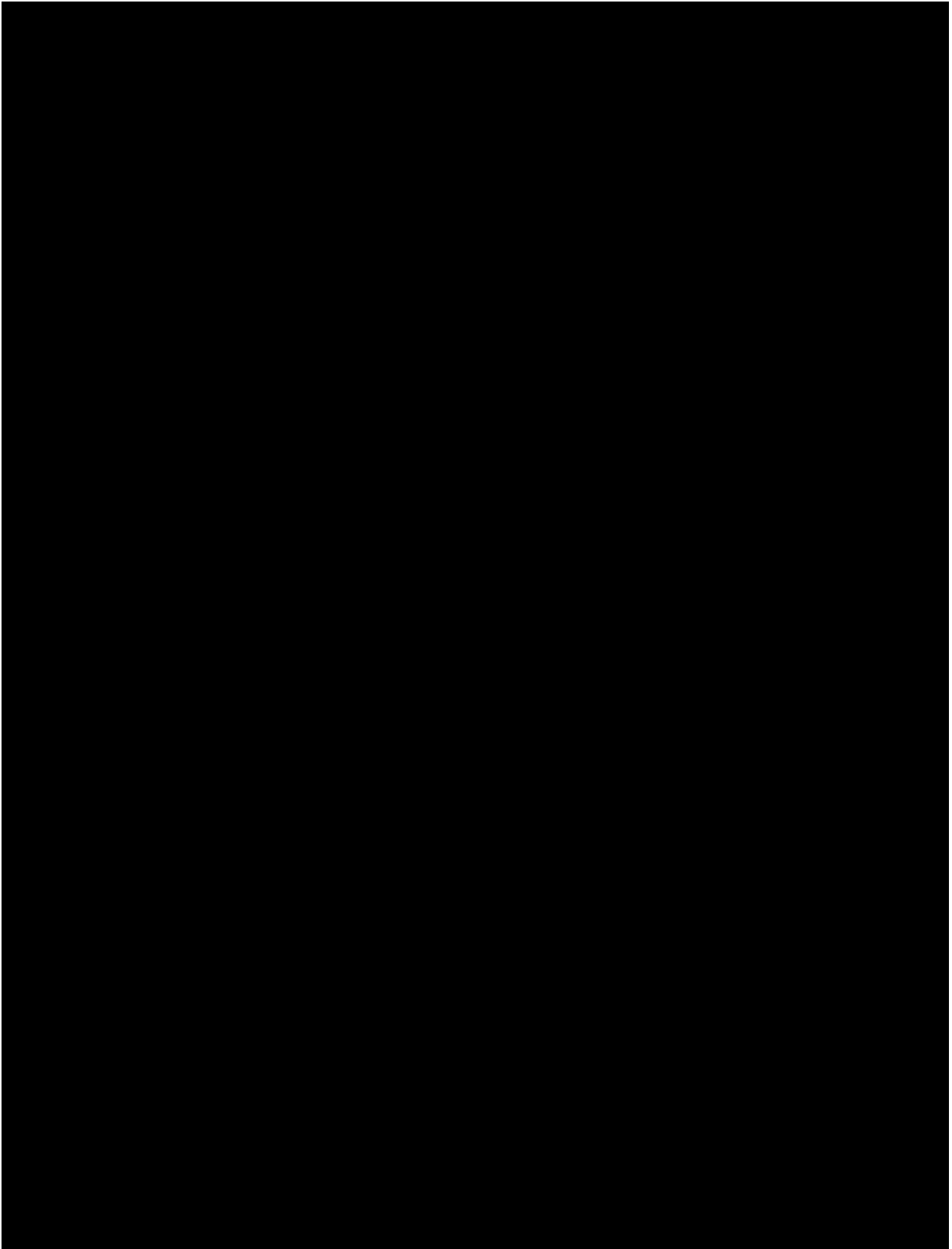
(Fig 55) Context of parc de la villette , By Nathanssu ,
<https://nathanssu.wordpress.com/2012/02/17/defining-hybrid-precedent-studies/>



(Fig 56) circulation , By Nathanssu
<https://nathanssu.wordpress.com/2012/02/17/defining-hybrid-precedent-studies/>



(Fig 57) Programs, <https://nathanssu.wordpress.com/2012/02/17/defining-hybrid-precedent-studies/>



(Fig 58) Parc de la villette follies,
https://archipressone.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/20120923_111409.jpg

Disaster Relief Shelters:

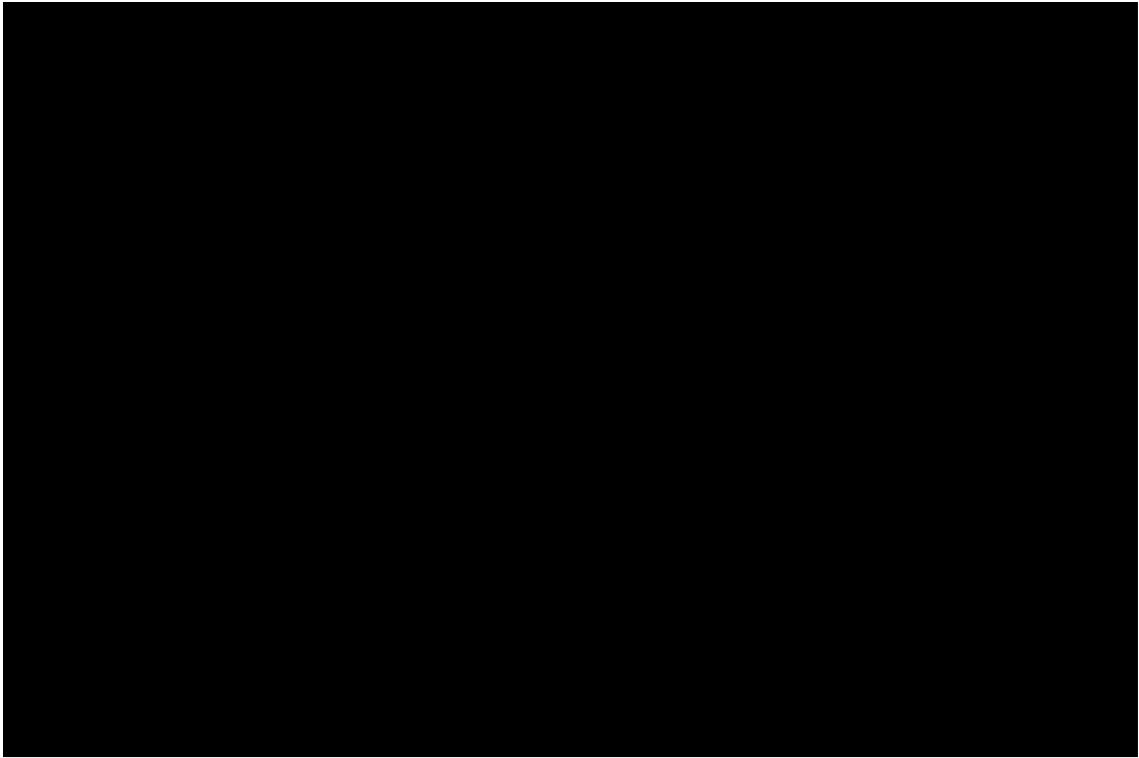
Disaster relief (DR) shelters are vital in responding to catastrophes and recovering from loss. DR shelters are designed to create secure places for people who have either fled from or lost their usual accommodations as a result of a disaster. This temporary form of architecture immediate shelter for the victims, aid in recovery, and provide a foundation for starting anew.¹⁰

Urban Intensity Architects + TAArchitects + Kyungsub Shin: Tanauan, Leyte, Philippines

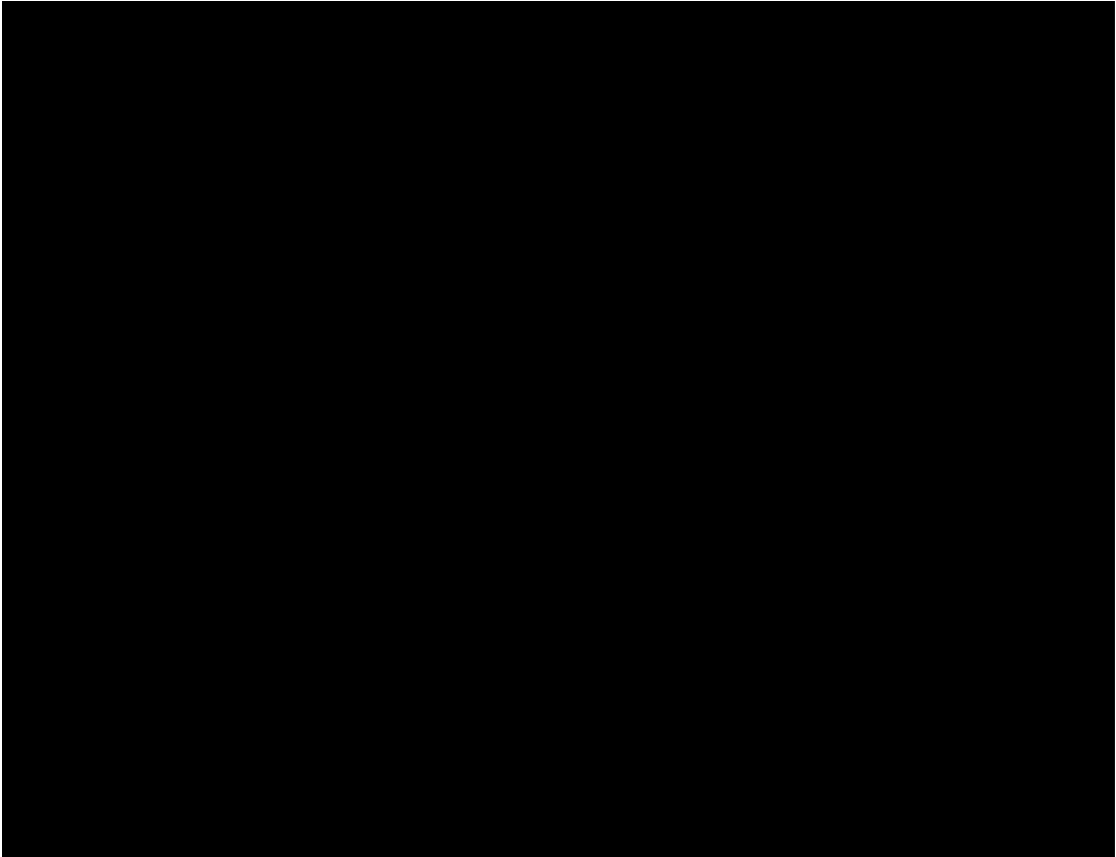
The Architecture for Society Disaster Responsive Shelter (ASDRS) is another temporary form of architecture designed to respond to disasters and that's structure is heavily dependent on the social and geographical context in which it is placed. When typhoon is forecasted, the inhabitants need to evacuate the site, and this shelter serves as the gathering point for the people for last-minute evacuees. The shelter is easily constructed, pre-fabricated in a "kit-of-parts" format and constructed on site. The ASDRS, because of its design, functions in two forms—an ordinary phase and an emergency phase. For the majority of the shelter's existence, it functions in its ordinary phase, but switching over to the emergency phase is intuitive.¹¹ This example of interim architecture allows its occupants to assess a given situation and engage with its form.

¹⁰ Abdulrahman Bashawria*, Stephen Garritya and Krisen Moodley," *AN OVERVIEW OF THE DESIGN OF DISASTER RELIEF SHELTERS*" 2014

¹¹ <http://www.archdaily.com/627906/disaster-responsive-shelter-urban-intensity-architects-taarchitects>



(Fig 59) Urban Intensity Architects + TAArchitects + Kyungsub Shin: Tanauan, Leyte, Philippines
<http://www.archdaily.com/627906/disaster-responsive-shelter-urban-intensity-architects-taarchitects>

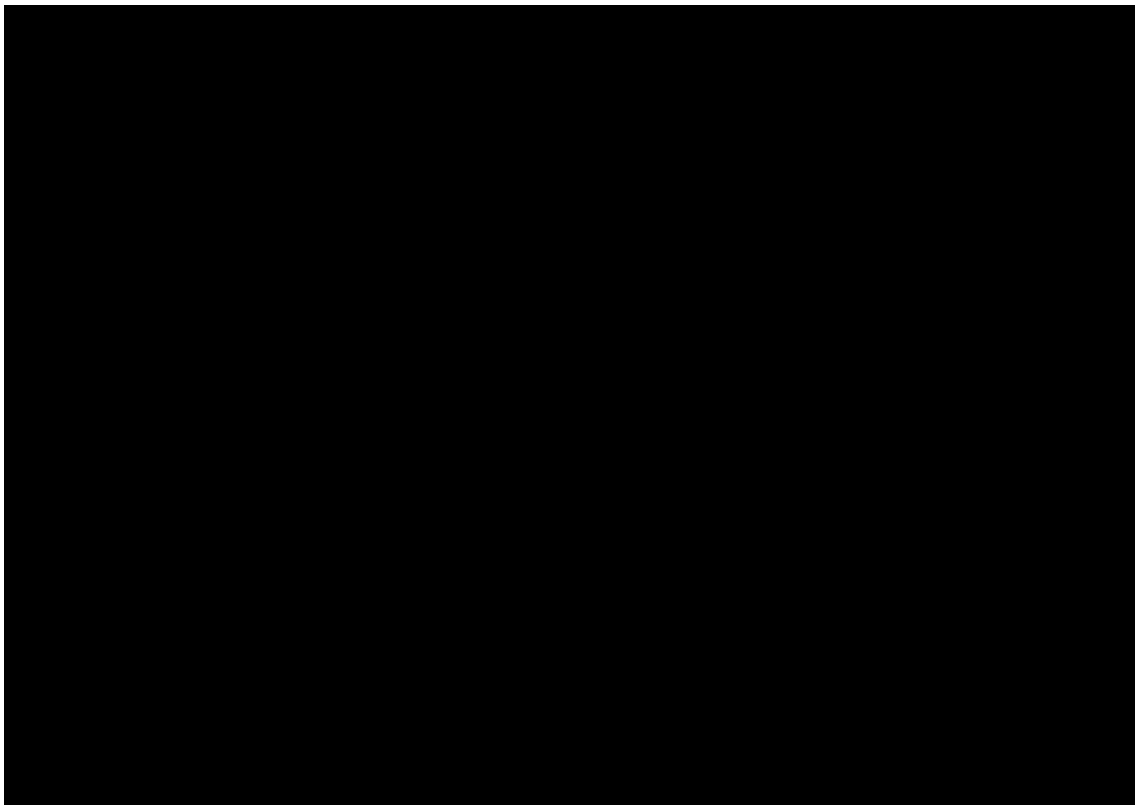


(Fig 60) Urban Intensity Architects + TAArchitects + Kyungsub Shin: Tanauan, Leyte, Construction

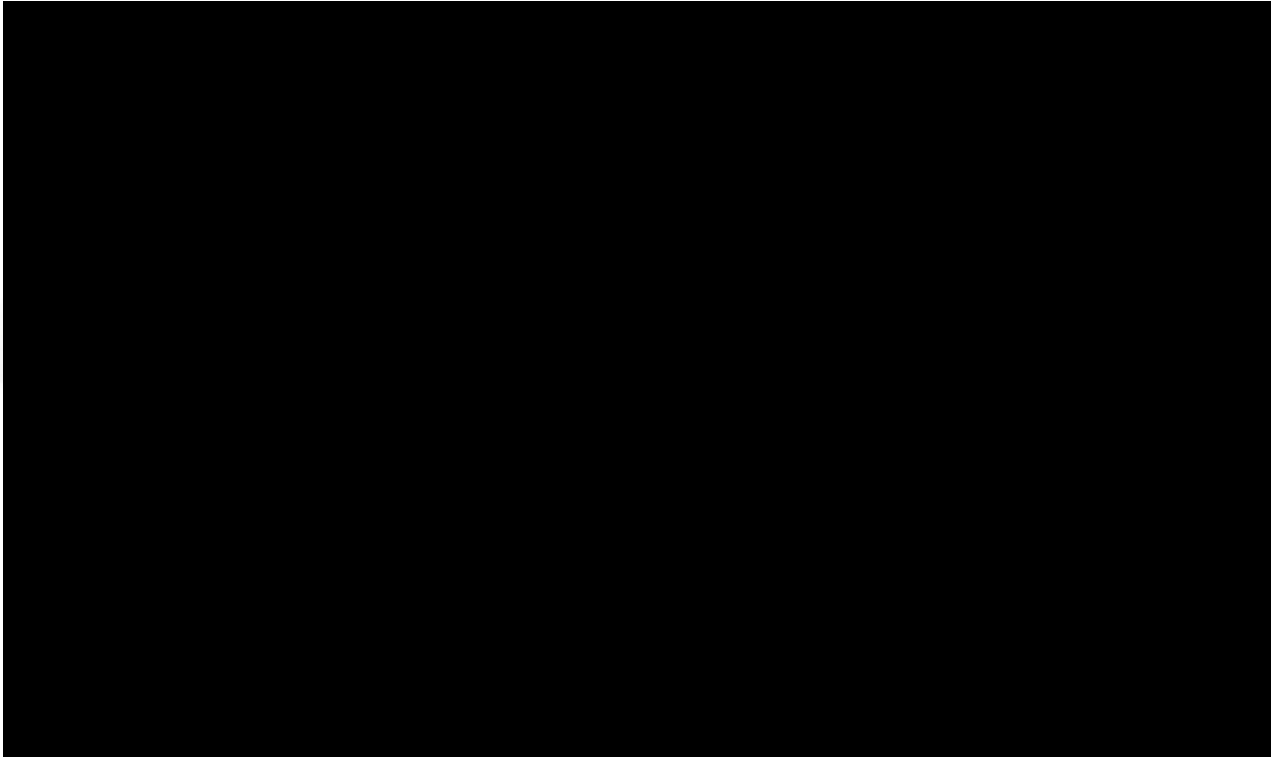
Exhibitions

Nevette Pavilions, Markus Heisdorff

The Nevette pavilions are the realization of 16 unique lightweight steel, object buildings designed to serve as textile multifunctional rooms—programmed for exhibition, presentation, conference, concert, as well as event space—built using six different types of materials and construction.

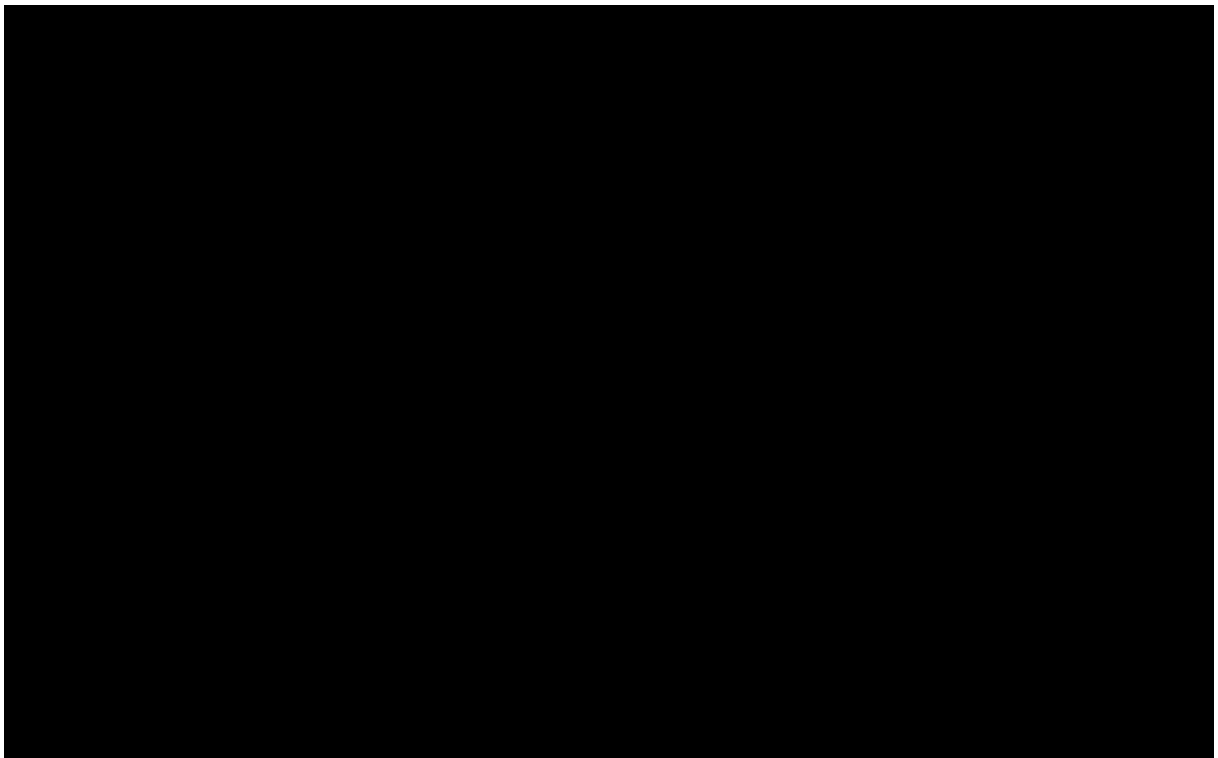


(Fig 61) Nevette Pavilions, <http://www.detail.de/artikel/markus-heisdorff-low-cost-houses-und-pavillons-11633/>



(Fig 62)Typology

<http://www.detail.de/artikel/markus-heinsdorff-low-cost-houses-und-pavillons-11633/>



(Fig63) Plan and axon view

<http://www.heinsdorff.de/de/arbeiten/installationen/pavillons-ii>

Chapter 5: Program and Users

Users:

The proposed Gozar (cultural park) would be a center not just for Iranians who live in or are visiting the Washington, D.C. area but also for other people who want to learn about Iran and its culture and people—visitors curious to know about the country, people, food, music and architecture. The building would provide a place for visitors to gather during special events like Norouz (Iranian New Year) or any other occasions.

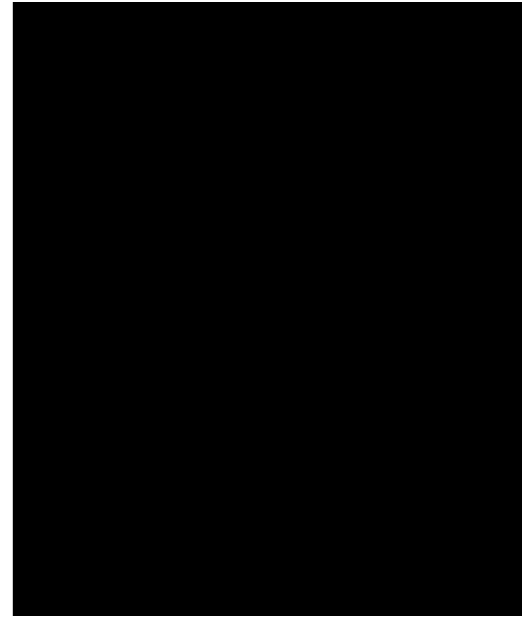
According to extrapolated U.S. Census data and other independent surveys done by Iranian-Americans themselves in 2009, the largest concentration—about 72,000 people—living around Los Angeles, other large communities include New York/New Jersey, which have 9.1% of the U.S.' Iranian population, followed by Washington, D.C./Maryland/Virginia (8.3%) and Texas (6.7%).¹²

This cultural center can provide a gathering place for the third largest Iranian community in the United States, but most importantly the goal is to attract the residents of the District of Columbia and tourists from all over the United States, or even other countries, to visit this cultural center as one of their destinations and without traveling thousands of miles learn about Iran and experience its culture, music and food.

Potential users of the cultural park include:

¹² Iranian-Americans and the 2010 Census: Did We Shrink? By Hossein Hosseini. Payvand.com.

Sarah: a Graduate student and mother of four children. Sarah loves to travel and enjoys learning about other cultures, and last summer she participated in a Study Abroad class in Turkey. At the time, she already enjoyed Middle Eastern food and culture, but over the course of the trip she really fell in love with Turkish cuisine. During her trip, she learned to cook traditional Turkish dishes from the owners of the Kekov Pension in Ucagiz. When she returned to the United States, she ordered a Turkish cookbook but it did not intimate the



(Fig 64) Sarah Abdullah, photo
provided by Sarah

Turkish cooking that she fell in love with. Sarah is excited to visit the new Iranian Cultural Park to learn how to cook some traditional Iranian dishes. She hopes to meet many new friends at the Cultural Park so they can exchange recipes and cooking tips that can only be understood in person and with good conversation.

Nasim: born in Iran but grew up in Spain. She moved to the U.S. when she was 18 and she married her husband Hamid. The two have a son together named Nima. Although Nasim has been back to Iran several times, she still likes to relive moments of being immersed in her culture. She takes her son to the Cultural Park to enjoy the activities and participate in Farsi classes.



(Fig 65) Nasim Amini and her Son,Phot
provided by Nasim

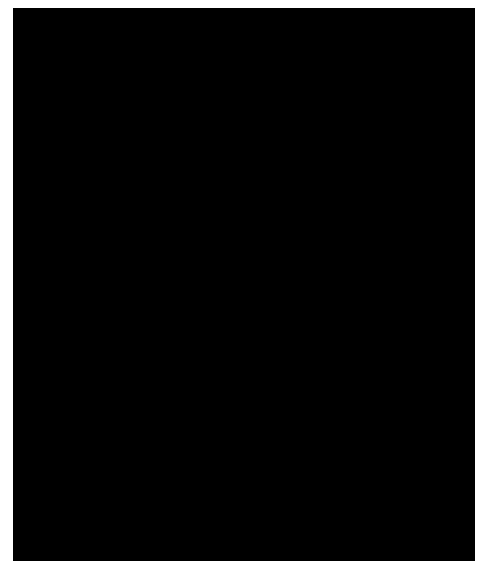
Jakie: from Louisiana and is visiting D.C. with her family for Spring Break. When she and her family were touring the museums, it was in the Frear Gallery that she saw a flyer for a Norooz event in an Iranian Cultural Park on Mass. Ave. and she remembered that her old college roommate, Mitra, is from Iran. Jackie decided to take the family to the Park for a night of Iranian music and food, and surprise her old friend when she goes back with some information about her country.



(Fig 66) Jakie, Photo

provided by Mitra

Foroud: left Iran when he was 17 to complete his education in the U.S. After the revolution, Foroud never returned because his father was a journalist executed by the Islamic government based false accusations. Going to the Cultural Park brings back warm memories, like when he was helping his father in the Embassy to publish a report about an event. Now Foroud is behind closed doors of the Iranian Embassy and hoping that one day the doors are open again.



(Fig 67) Foroud Amirani
phot provided by Foroud

Program:

Again, as is the nature of the thesis design itself, the programmed activities are also temporary. The program for the Gozar is as follows:

- Flexible & Multi-Purpose Space for—
 - Art Exhibitions
 - Music Performance
 - Dance Performance
 - Poetry (*Hafez khani*, *Shahnameh khani*) reading
 - Food Festivals
 - Arts & Crafts workshops
 - Special events and occasion (*Norouz*, *Yalda*, etc.)
 - Intercultural Communication

To make connections between Iranians and the other visitors of this cultural park, one of the key ideas is to provide a place to display messages from everyday people of Iran, so that visitors may choose to respond with their own messages—an international dialogue of sorts.



ما مردم ایران همه مردم دنیا را دوست
داریم. ایران گداز با چهار فصل است
با رنگی قدیمی و مناظره زیبا طبیعت
دارد. مردمی جوان و خوش
و صمیمی و دوستی برای همه جهان
قراره ام
نarges

Narges,65



شادی، آرامش و دوستی را
بسیار دوست دارم
ما مردم ایران همه مردم دنیا را دوست
داریم. ایران گداز با چهار فصل است
با رنگی قدیمی و مناظره زیبا طبیعت
دارد. مردمی جوان و خوش
و صمیمی و دوستی برای همه جهان
قراره ام
Abir

Abir,37



کرمی نقدی طعمه خزان سال را
بسیار دوست دارم و دستان را
نوعه بیان شوکه می بینم
لحمه لقمه قوری که می علامت آنرا (فیما)
کرمی نقدی

Kiomars,27



دوست من در هر لحظه از زمان
Babak

Babak,46

(Fig 68) Messages from people of Iran to the visitors of the Gozar, Photos by author:
Zara Naser

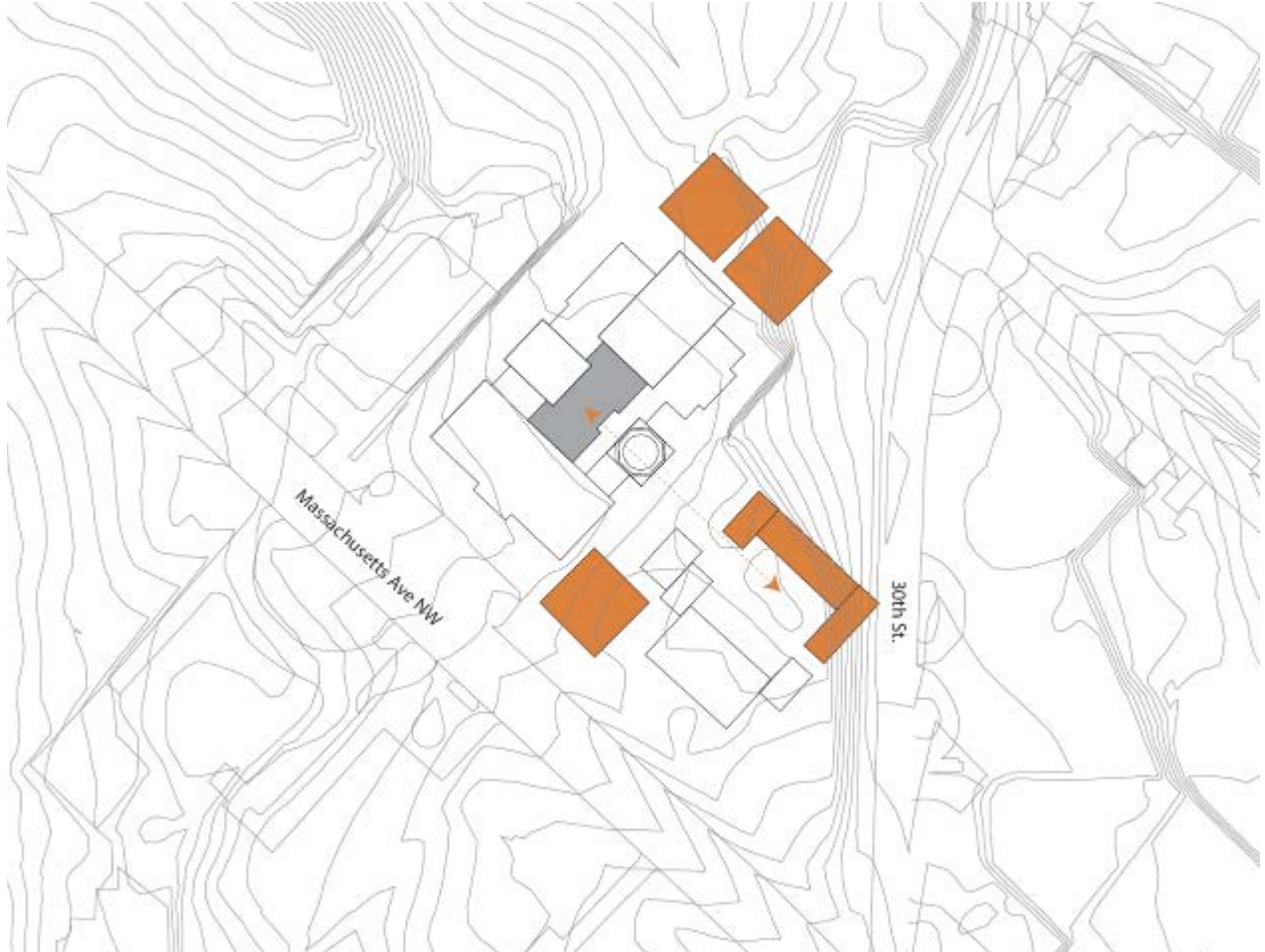
Chapter 6: Design concept and Proposal

Again, the design proposal consists of a gateway followed by a series of temporary pavilions sitting between the existing embassy and ambassador's residence. The concept of design is to make all structures transparent and use it as a symbol for the future of the relationship between two countries.



(Fig 69) Potential nodes for installations, Illustration by author: Zara Naser

Possible configurations:



(Fig 70) Enclosing the space in front of the residence to provide a new courtyard and Connect in to the existing courtyard, Illustration by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 71) Linear installation mimicking the bazaar, and providing different experiences along the path,

Illustration by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 72) Small moments scattered around the site connected with a pathway, Illustration by author:

Zara Naser



(Fig 73) Intersection and entry points, diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 74) Axiality and the node (dividing the site to four quarter) 4 is the number that comes from the 4 elements in nature (water, fire, earth and wind) diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 75) Void spaces, diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 76) Location of pavilions and gates, diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



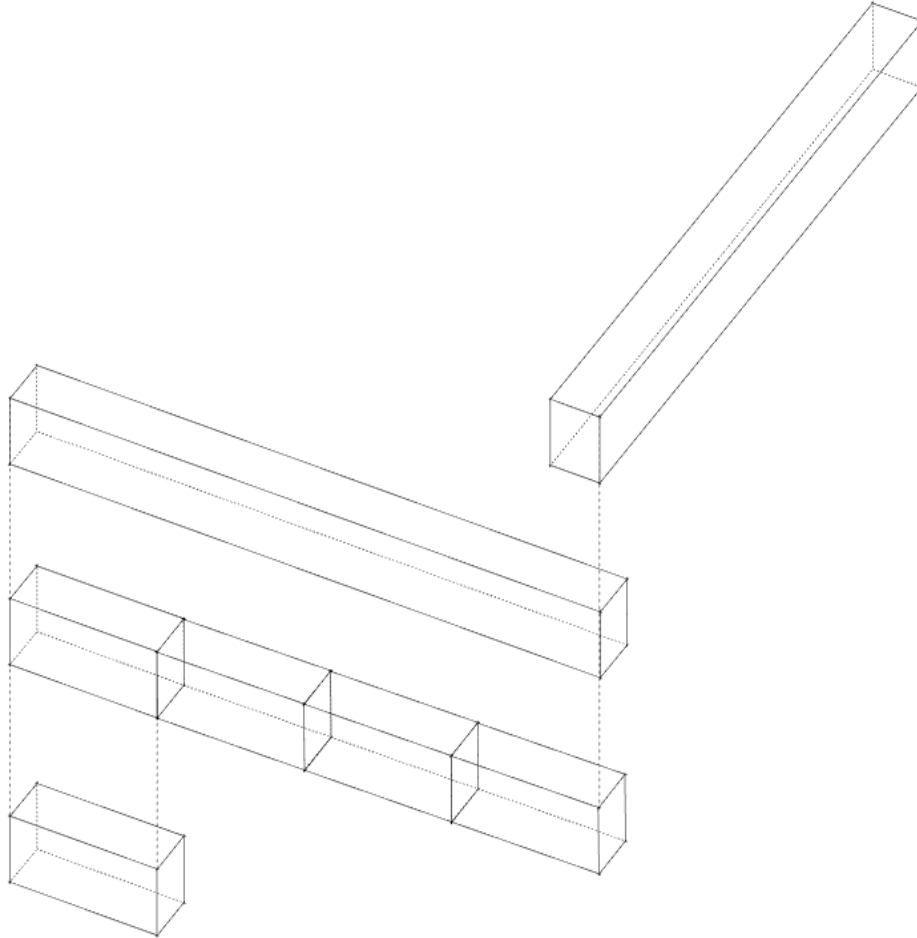
(Fig 77) Water as barriers between the existing buildings and the pathways and also as a symbol of the relationship between the two countries. Diagram illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 78) Gozar aerial rendering, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser

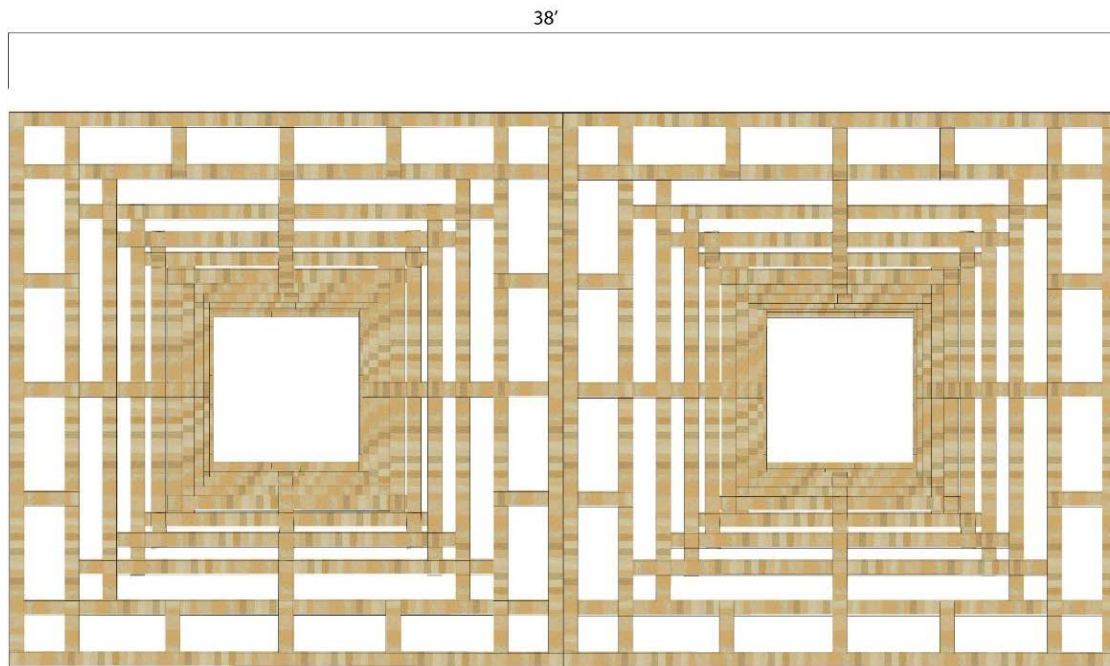
The paving begins as a solid surface to symbolize of the broken relationship and the further one moves into the Gozar, the more the porous the path becomes. This gradation of solid to void also helps with water management. Should there be an overflow of rain, the cistern beneath the octagonal grate collects excess runoff. The construction method for the proposed walls, gateway and pavilions is a system of stacking interlocked wood pieces, simulating the masonry construction using a different material. Compared to masonry, wood is light and the structures can be

fabricated off site and assembled on the site, making the structures easily removable when needed. The wood pieces can be recycled and used somewhere else.



(Fig 79) Method of construction and concept of the design, Illustration by author: Zara Naser

Gateway:



(Fig80) Gateway plan, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



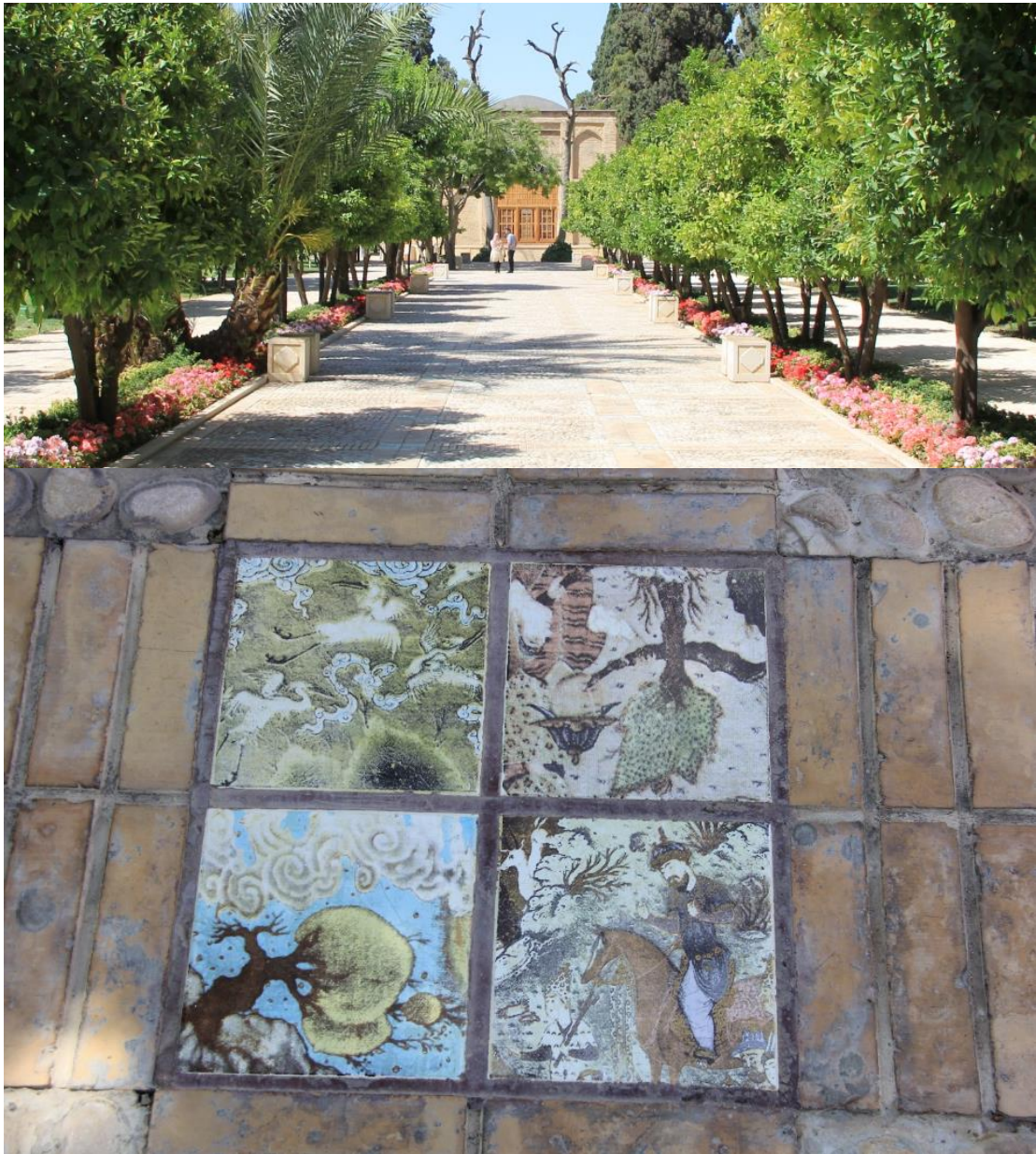
(Fig 81) Gateway Elevation, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig82) Gateway approach, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Timeline:

Throughout the Gozar, adjacent to the wall of the closed embassy, the story of the relationship between Iran and the United States along with the story of this complex can be found on the tiles of the pathway. The idea originally comes from Persian gardens and the way they illustrate stories on the paving of the garden floor. (Fig. 83)



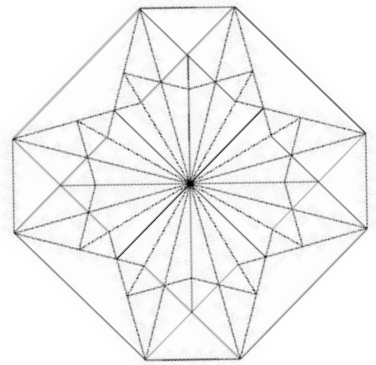
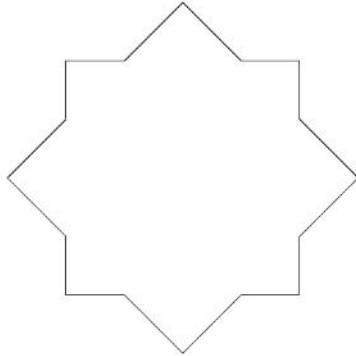
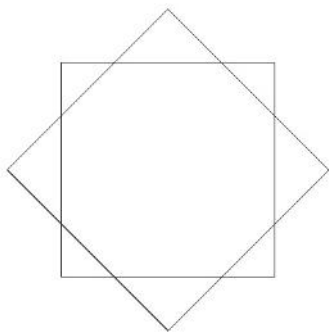
(Fig 83) stories on the tiles of the pavings of the Persian gardens, Photo by author: Zara Naser



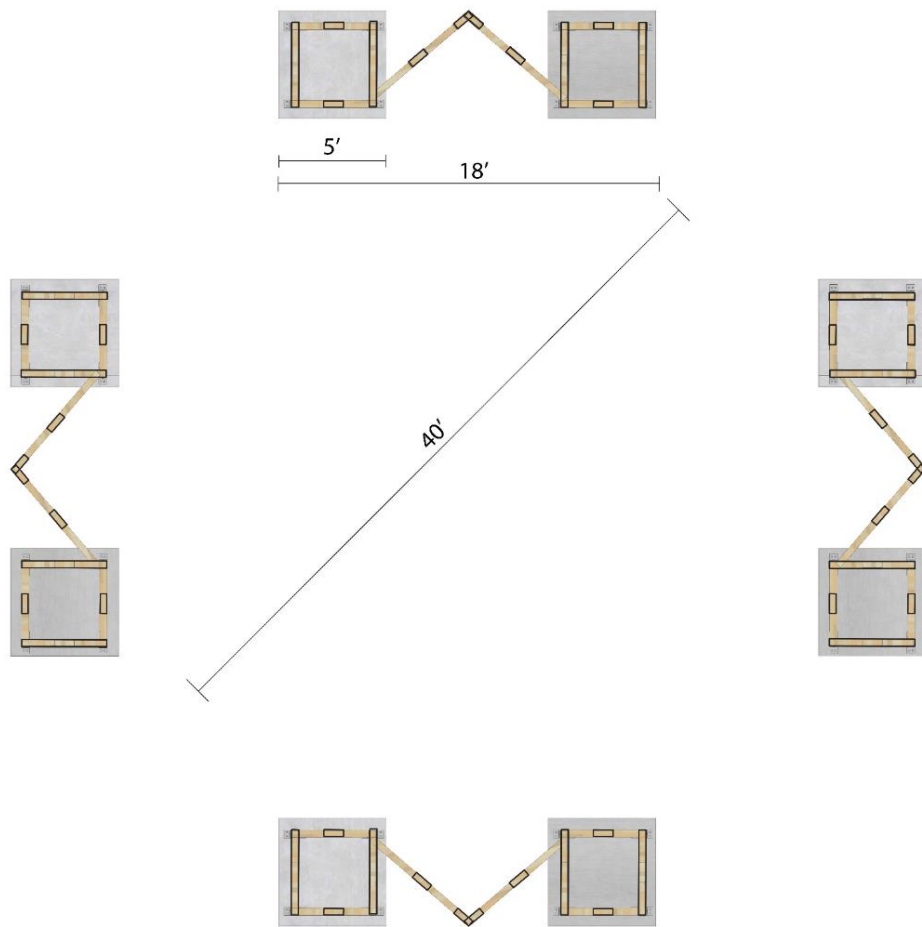
(Fig 84) Timeline story on the paving, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Pavilions:

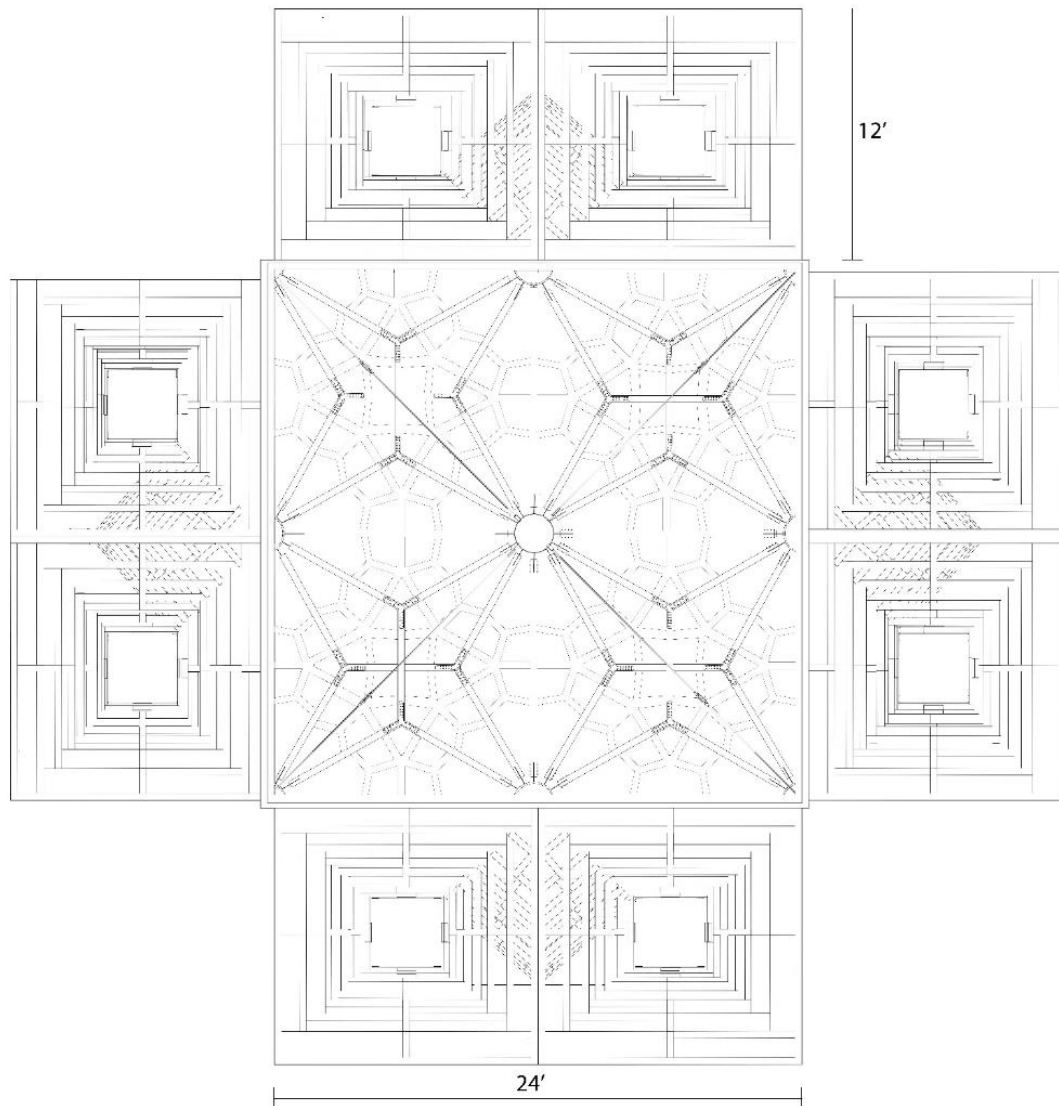
Mehr (Sun) Pavilion



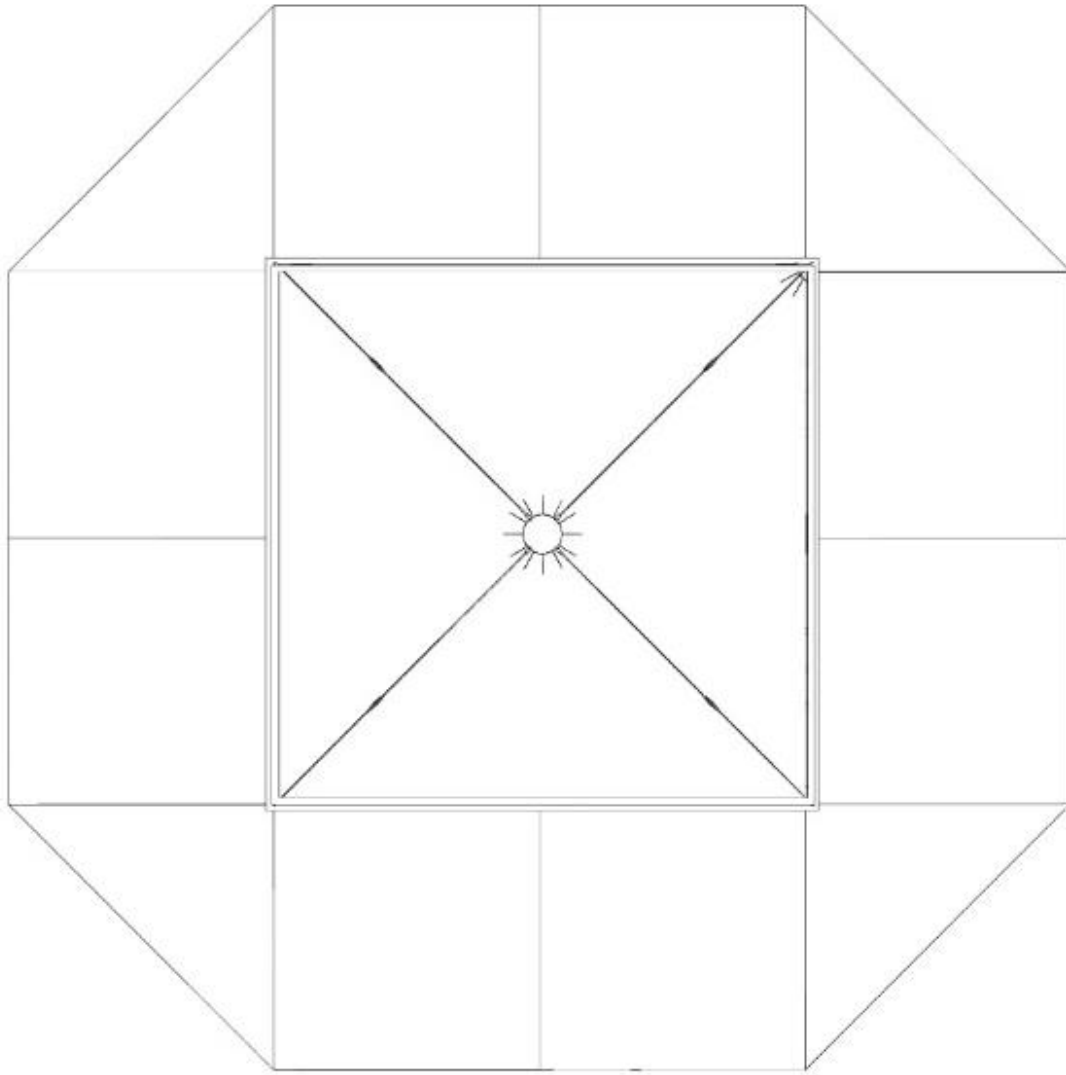
(Fig85) Parti idea, Images illustrated by author :Zara Naser



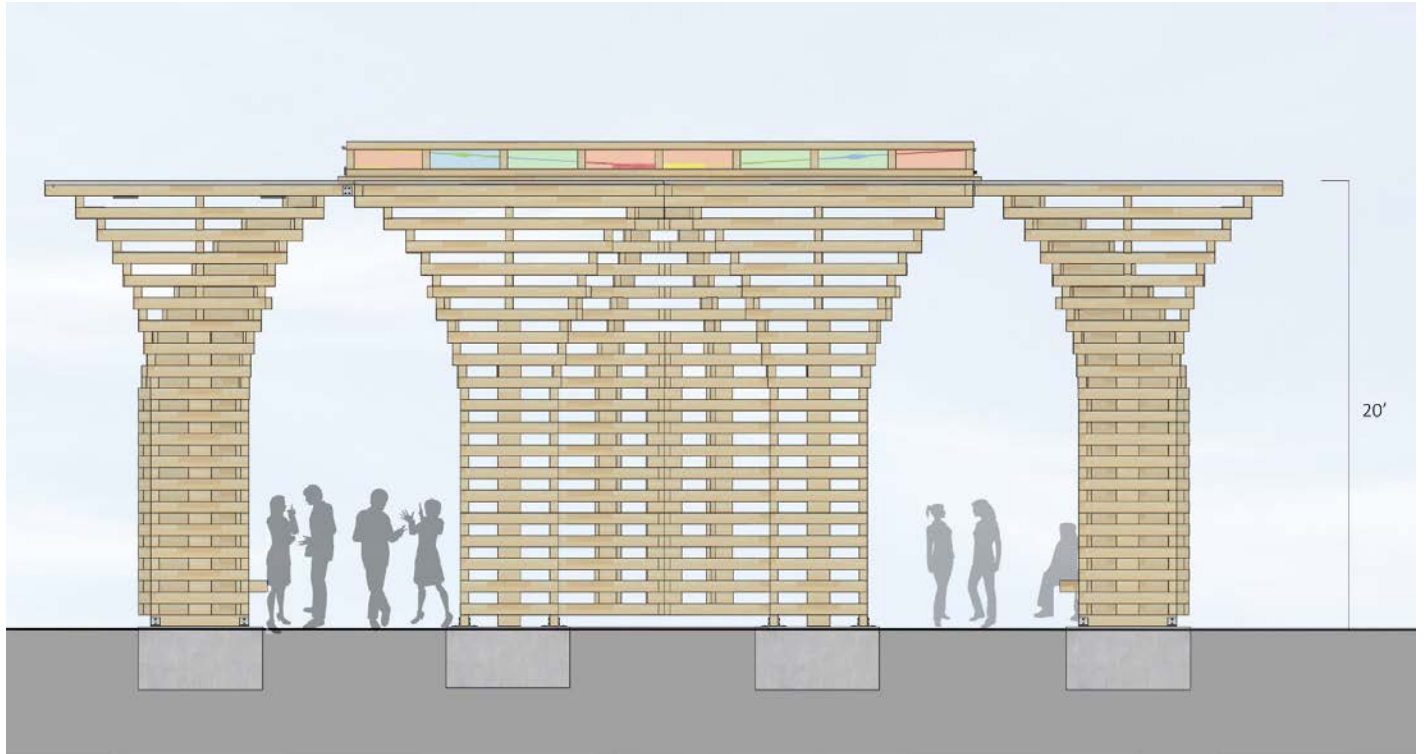
(Fig 86) Plan of the pavilion, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 87) Plan at the roof level showing the wood patterns, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



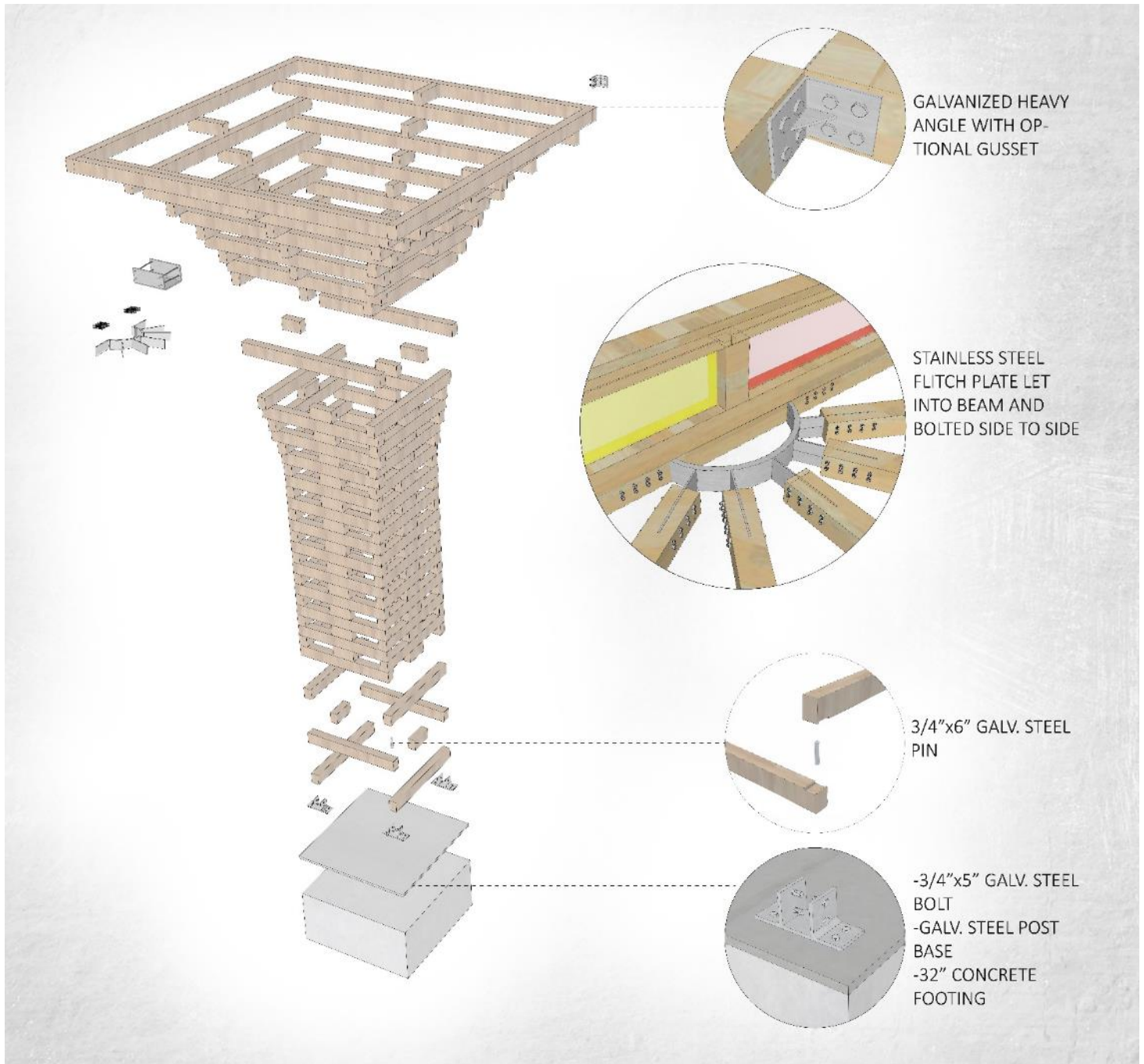
(Fig 88) Roof plan showing the cables that support the roof, Image illustrated by author :Zara Naser



(Fig 89) Elevation of the pavilion, Image illustrated by author :Zara Naser



(Fig 90) Mehr (Sun) Pavilion during a *Norouz* event, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



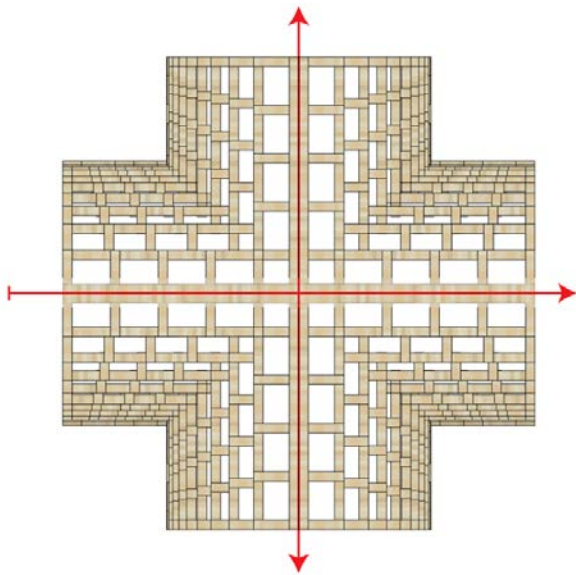
(Fig91) Explode axon and detail of one of the columns and the method they are assembled. Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



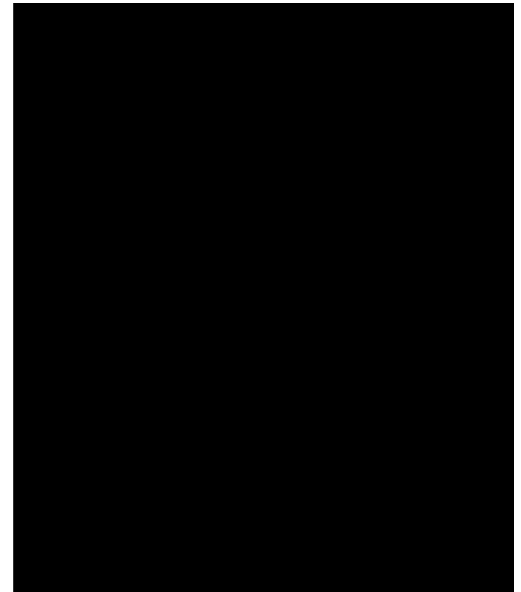
(Fig 92) interior of the Mehr(sun) pavilion during a dance ceremony, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Chahartaghi (4 Arches)

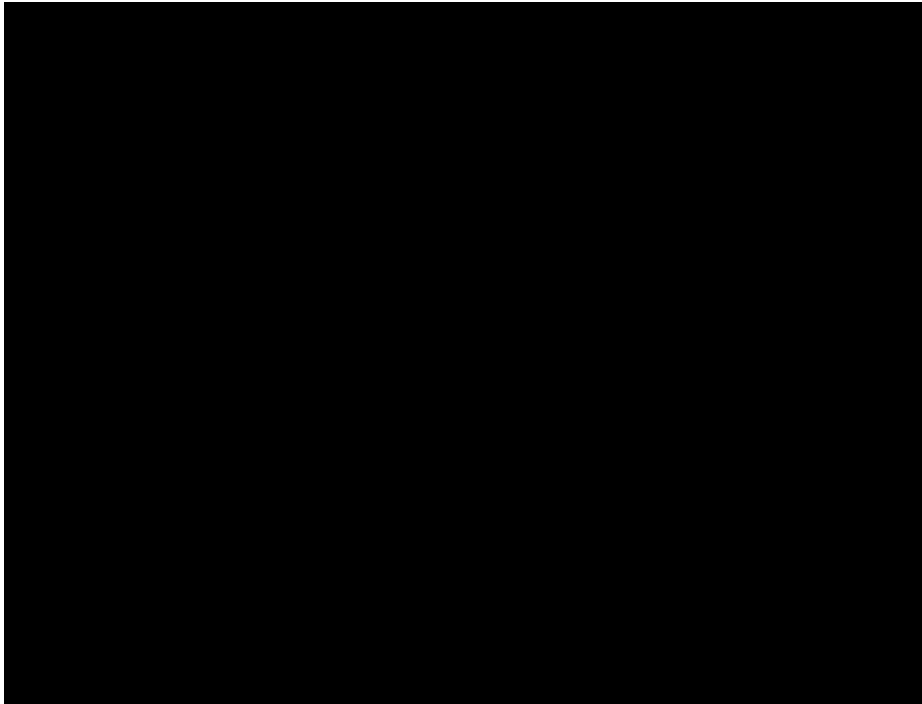
The idea of the pavilion comes from structures called *chahartaghi*, which means ‘four arches’ (Fig. 95). This structural arrangement is typically used in secular architecture, temporary and even monumental applications. *Chahartaghi* plans, because they offer much in terms of atmosphere, have also been used in religious buildings. In the Islamic period, from Asia to Africa, they were used to build mosques, mausoleums, and for many other purposes.



(Fig 93) Three of the gates are open to the Gozar and the 4th one facing the embassy building that is closed.



(Fig 94) Plan of Niasar Chahartaghi,
<http://ghiasabadi.com/niasar0.html>



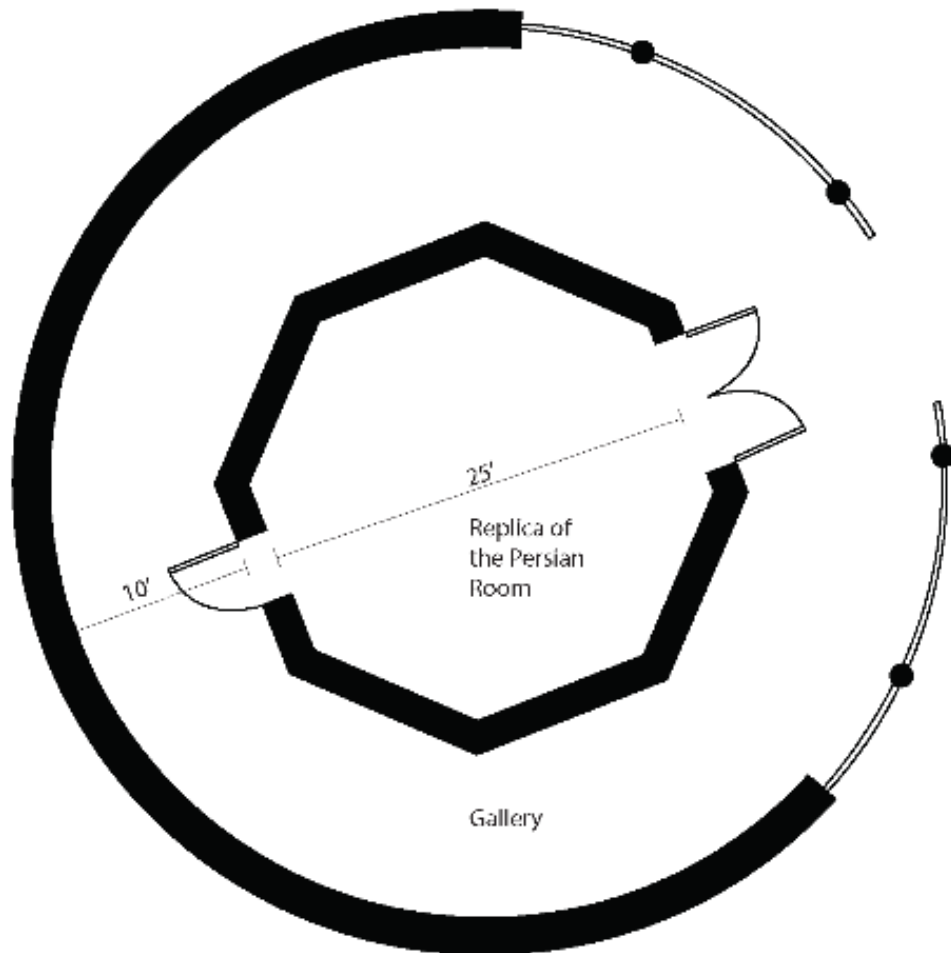
(Fig 95) Niyasar Chahartaghi from Sassanid era, http://www.ghiasabadi.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/Niasar_1.2.jpg



(Fig 96) *Chahartaghi*, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Aban (water) Pavilion:

Below is a replica of the Persian room at the center of this pavilion and the circulation around it also serves as a flexible space—it can be used as an art gallery or for other exhibitions. (Fig. 97)



(Fig 97) Plan of the *Aban* (water) pavilion, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 98) Aban (water) pavilion , Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 99) Replica of the Persian room in the middle, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Conclusion:

In the end, embedded within the heart of the Gozar's design is the hope that one day the Iranian Embassy reopens. Should the building resume its intended purpose, any part of the Gozar may be disassembled and removed from the site. Any part of the Gozar may also be left behind to serve as a moment frozen in time, which would serve to represent a time of cultural engagement. It would only be right to leave enough traces of the installation so that, once again, people may be spurred to ask questions and remember significant moments of the past. Famous examples of this type of remembrance live on today—the Berlin Wall (Fig. 100) being one of the most renowned. Figures 101 through 105 illustrate the intended lifespan of the Gozar along Massachusetts Avenue.



(Fig 100) Trace of Berlin wall , Photo by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 101) Residence building was built in 1930, image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 102) Embassy building was built in 1956, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 103) Embassy was renovated in 1973, Image illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 104) Gozar Park proposed in 2016, Image illustrated by author :Zara Naser



(Fig 105) Embassy opens again after the relationship between the two countries goes back to normal. Traces of Gozar park left for visitors to know the story of the time that this complex was closed. Image illustrated by author:Zara Naser

GOZAR

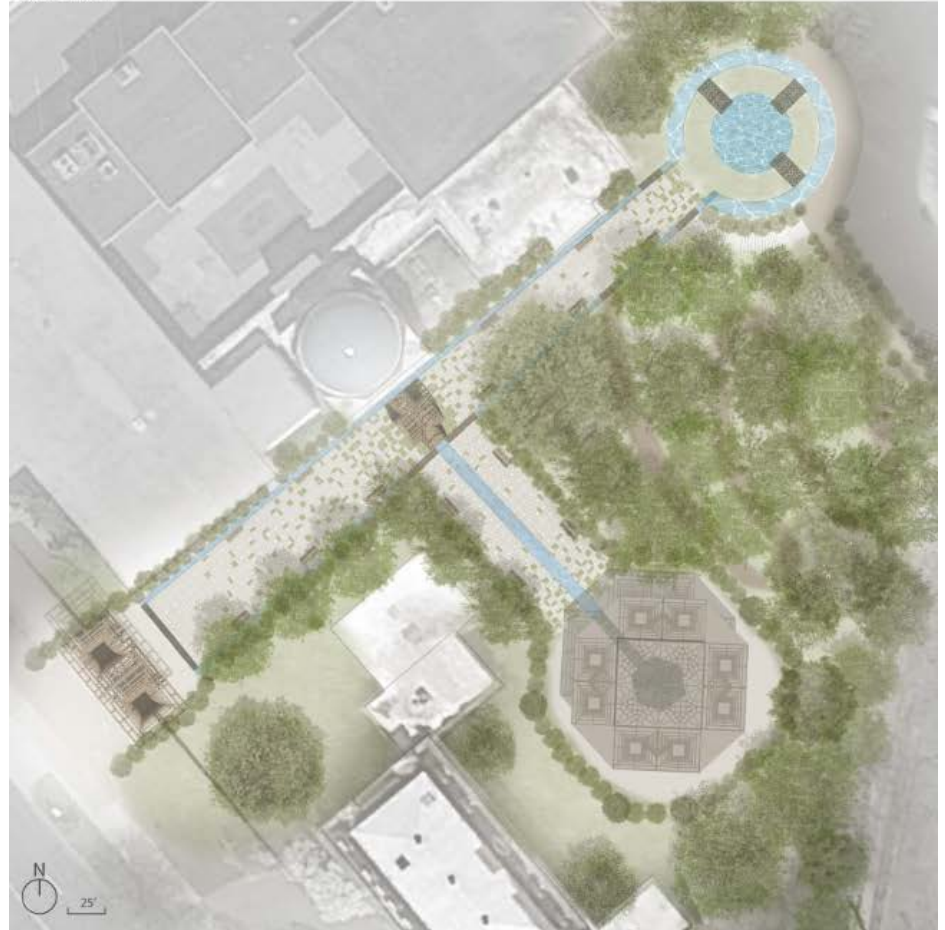
IRANIAN CULTURAL PARK

"Architects can't force people to connect, they can only plan the crossing points, remove barriers and make the meeting places useful and attractive."
Denise Scott Brown

The severed relationship between Iran and the United States is encapsulated within the **abandoned architecture of the Iranian Embassy**. In essence, architecture has become the physical manifestation of a problem. This thesis will investigate how can architecture begin a dialog of cultural healing by revitalizing the void spaces in between the abandoned buildings on the site of the former Iranian Embassy? Ultimately, the project proposes the installation of a **series of temporary architectural interventions** within a **cultural park** that reveals the true culture of Iran, as a way of combating the stereotypes about Iran that have prevailed throughout the United States. The proposed Cultural Park seeks to bring hope and vibrant interaction within this underutilized space. **Temporary, yet timeless** interventions located within the premises of the abandoned Iranian Embassy will create a place that engages visitors with the customs and history of Iran.



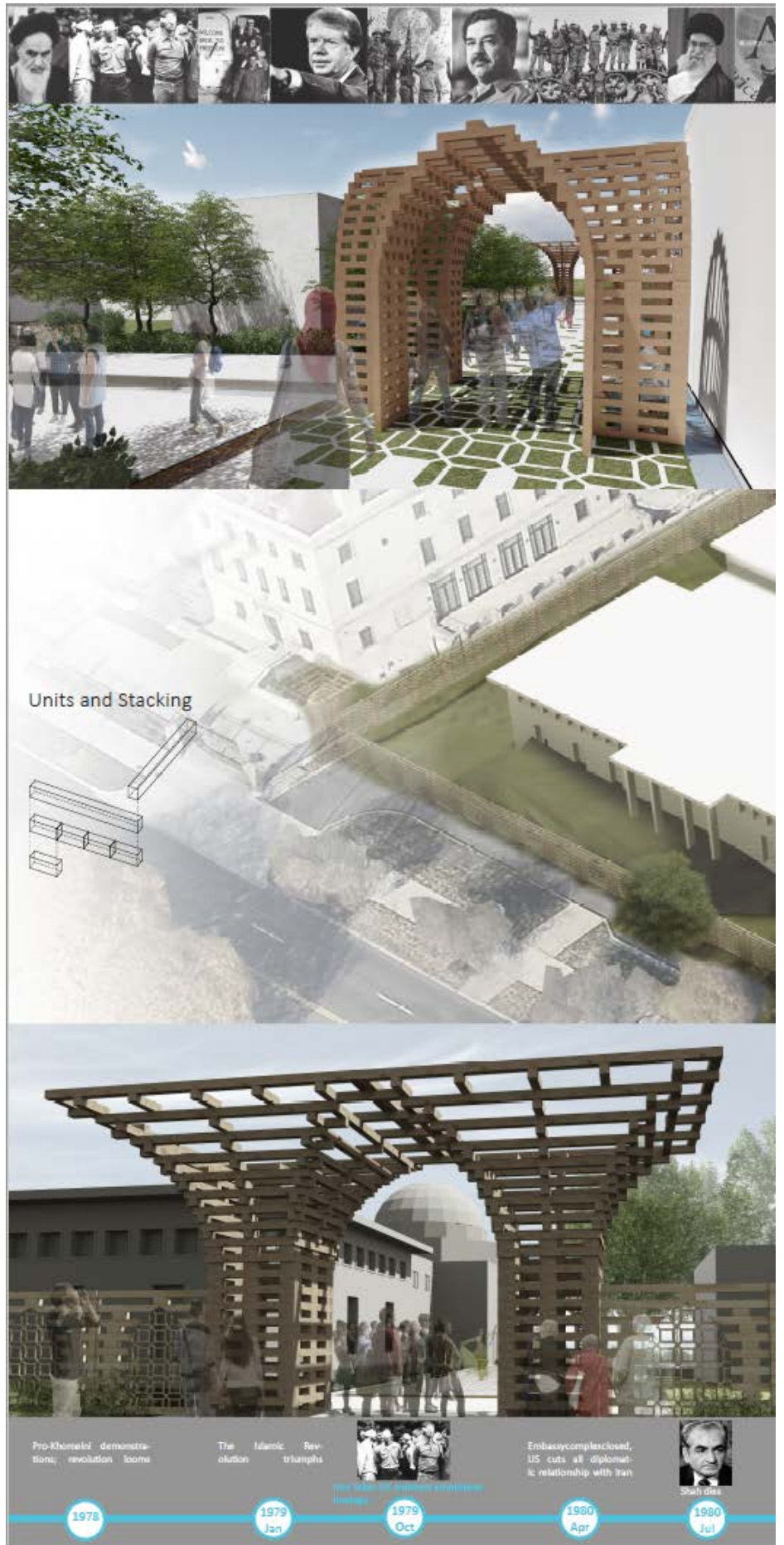
Site Plan



Site Section



(Fig 106) Thesis board 1 of 5,
Illustrated by author : Zara Naser

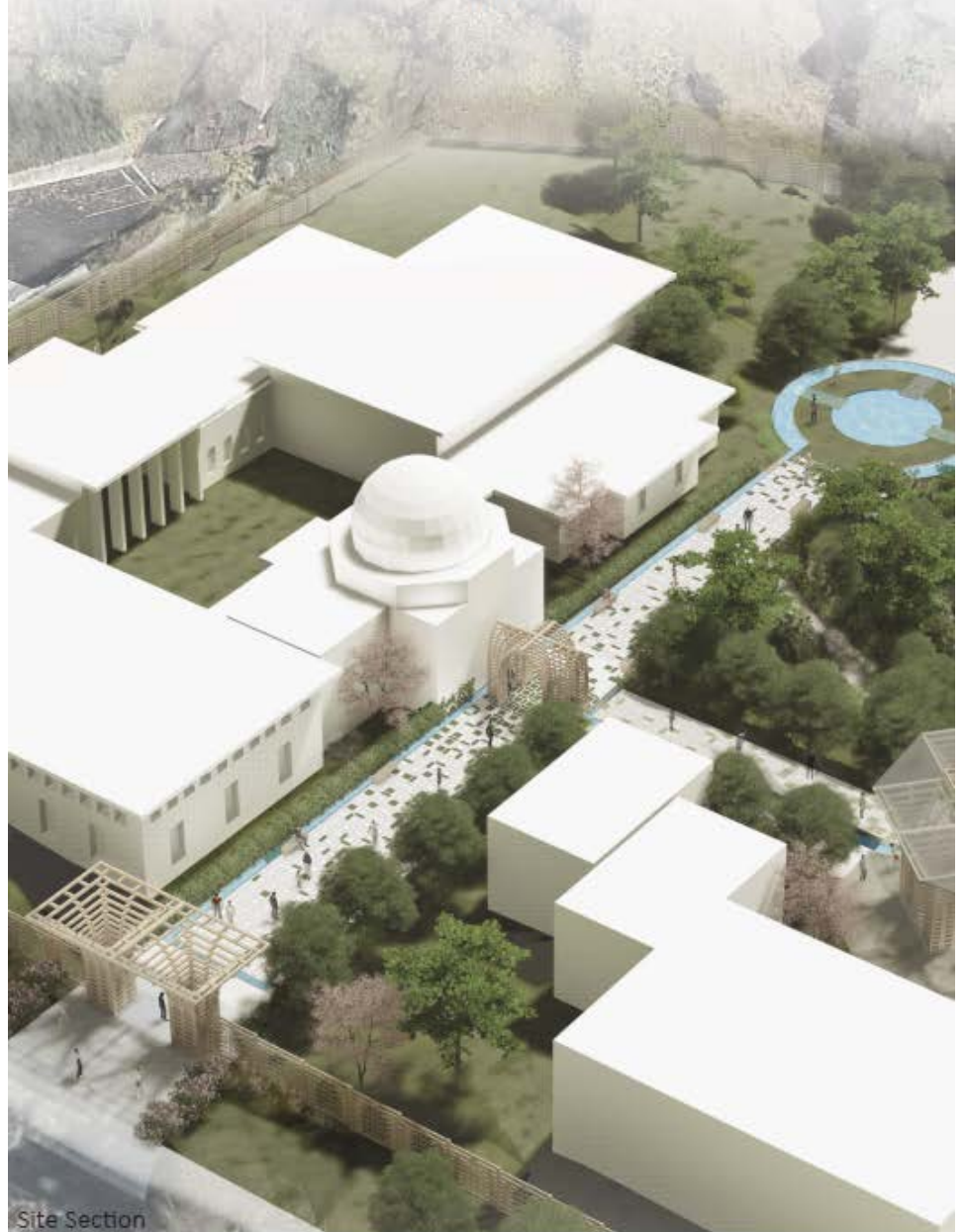


(Fig 107) Thesis board 2 of 5,
Illustrated by author: Zara Naser



"Raise your words, not your voice. It is the rain that grows flowers, not thunder."

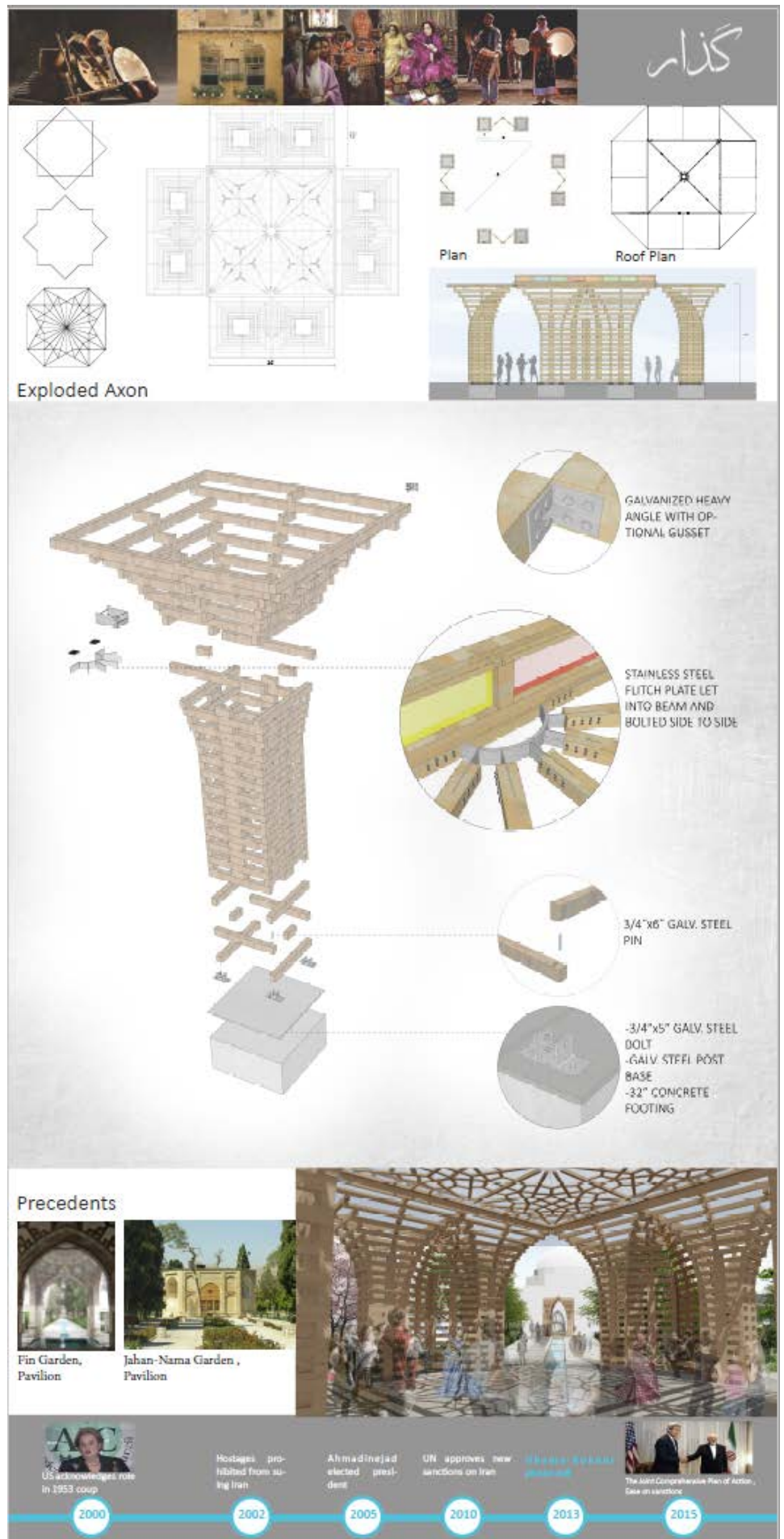
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(Fig 108) Thesis board 3 of 5,
Illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 109) Thesis board 4 of 5,
Illustrated by author: Zara Naser



(Fig 110) Thesis board 5 of 5,
Illustrated by author: Zara Naser

Glossary

Aban: Water

Chahartaghi: 4 arches, structure consisted of 4 entry arches

Hafez: Great Persian poet from

Hafez Khani: Ceremony of reading poems of *Hafez*

Mehr: Sun

Norouz: Iranian new year (vernal equinox)

Shahnameh khani: Ceremony of reading *Shahnameh*, a book from the great Iranian poet Ferdosi

Yalda: Celebration of the winter solstice

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